

11th February 2021



St Francis Church
you're welcome here

St Francis Church, Valley Park (virtually)

Weekly newsletter



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Lent

It's the start of Lent this week - forty days that echo Jesus' own forty days in the wilderness, facing temptation as he prepared for his earthly ministry. For us, it's a time of preparation for Easter through self examination and confession of all those things that separate us from God. Maybe we're choosing to give something up for Lent, or to take something up: reading more of the Bible, or a Christian book, or maybe joining in the SHAPE course!

There's a sense in which the season resonates with how things are at the moment, a sense in which we're all in a bit of a dry desert place, where the things that enable us to flourish best are missing - close human community being the main one. Back in the third century, the desert fathers and mothers actually went into the desert specifically to seek more of God in their lives. The barrenness and difficulties of the wilderness pushed these men and women to trust more completely in God and helped them to seek God and be found by Him.

Let's pray that this Lent, when the sense of being in the wilderness is greater than many of us have previously experienced, might prompt us, too, to seek God, knowing that we will be found by Him.

Half Term Bingo!

Looking for ideas to keep the family occupied at half term? Join in St Francis Church Activities Bingo! More details on p3 or by scanning this QR code!

Questions? Contact Joe on curate@sfvp.org.uk.





What's on? Bingo!

Something for half term - Check out our St Francis Church Bingo, complete a line and win a prize!
More details p1 and p3.

Mens' Breakfast

8.30am Saturday Feb 13th: Live from the Antarctic with our very own Brian King! Bring your own breakage - on the church Zoom link.

Lent course

We'll be running one in home groups and providing extra groups for any who'd like to join for Lent - email Sarah if you'd like to take part.

Ash Wednesday

There'll be a short online service for Ash Wednesday on Feb 17th at 7pm, on our usual Zoom link and before:

Take Time

The next one is Wednesday February 17th at 8pm on our Zoom link: Join us for a Christian meditation - an opportunity to find peace and to hear from God.

International Café

International Cafe - Frederick and Maryline in Strasbourg are hosting an International Cafe! They would love us to join them along with their local church; on Thursdays from 11am French time on the following Zoom link. They are looking forward to chatting with you!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86063980212pwd=L0tDaUxpOEIxdUVyemQwUUVV2NFEzUT09>

Meeting ID: 860 6398 0212, Passcode: 568175



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St. Francis Church Family



Welcome to the first St. Francis Family Bingo card!

We challenge you* and your families to take part in the activities on the Bingo card and try to achieve a line of 3, 4 corners or a full house.

There are prizes for everyone who takes part!

Please upload your photos of you and your family doing the activities to our Facebook page if you would like to, or email** them through to us! Do let us know which activity was your favourite one and why! Which one will you choose first?

*All activities must be supervised by a responsible adult and we remind you to stick to lockdown rules when taking part in the outdoor activities in line with current Government guidance.

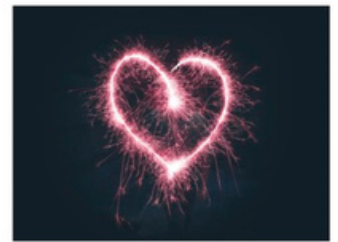
**Email to curate@stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk to claim your prizes 😊



St. Francis Church Family



February 2021



Take a photograph of something beautiful from God's creation.

Build a den for grown ups and children and watch a film from it.

Do a good deed or act of kindness for someone.



Go for a local run/cycle/walk with your grown-up and spell out a name from the Bible using the first letter of road signs (take photos).

After finding out the reason for Shrove Tuesday and pancakes - successfully toss a pancake with your grown-up and eat it!

Go somewhere with your grown-up where you have never been before.



Make a collage to illustrate a story from the Bible.

Play a game with your grown-up you have never played before.

Make a card, write in it, and post it to someone you love.



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St Francis Church Lent Course 2021

Join us as we look at the 'SHAPE' course together over Lent, in our Sunday talks and small groups- there are some just for Lent if you'd like to join.

YOUR SHAPE FOR GOD'S SERVICE



We'll be thinking about what shape we are for serving God - an opportunity to grow in confidence that we're where we're called to be, or to look at where might be a better fit.



The aim:

Your SHAPE for God's Service aims to enable church members to understand the unique SHAPE God has made them, the gifts he has given them and how he might want to use them. This is so that God's Kingdom may be built up as each person finds the ministry to which God is calling them in the Church and in the world. Hopefully this will enable participants to live and serve with more joy, satisfaction and fruitfulness. This should build a healthy growing church, and will affect the way each person engages with their family, friends, job, local community, and voluntary / leisure activities.

The core topics:

Your SHAPE for God's Service has a holistic approach. The sessions involve looking at your:

Spiritual Gifts (God's unique gifts to you)

Hear's Desire (what motivates and excites you; what you love to do)

Abilities (your talents, knowledge and skills)

Personality (your character, personal qualities and strengths)

Experience (your life experiences and what you've gained from them)for God's Service

- and to make the most of this opportunity, there'll be a short reflection for you to do (by yourself) in between sessions.

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In response to the pandemic, for the month of February, we're invited to call on God in prayer for our world, nation and communities:

Loving God,
at this time of crisis
when so many are suffering,
we pray for our nation and our world.
Give our leaders wisdom,
our Health Service strength,
our people hope.
Lead us through these parched and
difficult days
to the fresh springs of joy and comfort
that we find in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Week Two

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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Worship this week.

Worship in Lockdown 3.

Whilst it is legal to meet together in person for worship, Sarah and the wardens have agreed that we will share Sunday worship together on line only for now, in light of the new, more virulent virus variant and the extreme pressure on the NHS at this time. We will revert to live streaming from our homes. The exception is for funerals which will still take place in the church building on request and within the strict guidelines.

We're so grateful that we can still worship together in this way - thank you to all who make it possible.

Services this week

February 14th: Second Sunday before Lent

10am: Virtual Morning Worship - usual Zoom link.

Speaker: Sarah McClelland

Leader: Sarah McClelland

Reading:

Monday February 15th : Morning prayer

10am - usual Zoom link.

Wednesday February 17th: Service for Ash Wednesday

7pm - usual Zoom link

Leader and speaker: Joe Sweetnam

Link for services

Here's the super quick link that takes you to
all of our Zoom services and events:

www.bit.ly/SFCzoom

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Church Family News

Mens' Breakfast Saturday Feb 13th at 0830

This Saturday, 13th Feb, it's Men's Breakfast with a difference. All being well with the technology, we hope to speak live with our very own Dr. Brian King, currently leading work aboard the research ship RRS James Cook in the South Atlantic. Brian is a climate scientist and works for the National Oceanography Centre at Southampton – join us to hear about his work, the current project, and how his Christian faith and work impact each other. We'll meet on the usual Church Zoom, starting at 8.30am – bring your own breakfast of course. All are welcome and this may be a great opportunity to invite friends and family who may enjoy Men's Breakfast in future but need encouragement to join.

Ways to join:

- Type into your browser: www.bit.ly/SFCzoom (case- sensitive)
- Click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7799654356>
- Zoom app using Meeting ID: 779 965 4356 no password
- Or to call in by telephone: dial 0203 901 7895 then 7799 6543 56#

Talking Books on Cassette

Ian Kelso has some available, free of charge and delivered locally!
Contact him on iankelso@me.com or 02380 266476.

Letter of thanks from Outreach Radio Church services Coordinator Jamie:

Dear Rev. Sarah, and team and congregation,

I just wanted to quickly share my appreciation of you and your whole church for being willing to do all these radio services. I've very much enjoyed listening in during the times I've been able - but more than that, beyond the added stress, planning needs and uncertainty that radio might bring > I hope and pray that someone out there, or maybe a few someones... might be touched by God.

I always think to myself - the word Broadcast comes from seed scattering, casting your seeds, broadly! - and this is what these services do.

Thank you so much for doing the heavy lifting here - and I trust that God has been ministering to your church as you minister over Zoom and over the radio waves.

Thank you all for being willing for your service to be used in this way.

God bless you all!

Jamie from Velmore Church

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Points for prayer this week

- **From the World Council of Churches:** Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland

We pray for:

- environmental practices that preserve the natural environment, especially the Alps' melting glaciers
- the work for justice, reconciliation and peace pursued by the people and organizations here, seeking to shape globalization so that it benefits all
- religious freedom, also for those from non-Christian traditions
- overcoming the fear of, and welcoming the embrace of, those who are outsiders to the countries' historic, ethnic traditions.

Church Life: Points for prayer from CF URC and Methodist churches, as shared at a recent Churches together meeting:

- URC: Pray for the congregation and those who are isolated. Isolation is severe...
- CFMC Praise: Thank God for the way we've been able to maintain and develop connections through the pastoral visitors and phone buddies, the delivery weekly of a paper service and a letter / notices by foot or email, and for new relationships that have developed through "zoom coffee" and online worship.
- CFMC Pray: for our pastoral visitors and phone buddies, those who do weekly deliveries on walks or cycle rides, and for the pastoral team. For community users of our church and especially the Dovetail Cafe who are feeling isolated. And that we might find ways of managing the increasing deficit caused by not being able to let the building.

Our local Community:

- Pray for the residents of Guildford Drive and Montgomery Way
- For all we know who are unwell, especially those on our prayer chain.
- For all those who are struggling at this time financially, emotionally; those who are alone; those who are home schooling, those in care homes, and all frontline staff in the NHS, education, prisons, and all key workers.
- For the chaplaincy department of Winnchester prison and all with whom they come into contact
- For all young people at this time as they have to cope with Lockdown and are badly affected economically, socially and educationally.

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St Francis Church information



St Francis Church
you're welcome here

Answerphone		02380271152
Facebook		@stfrancisvp
Website		www.stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk
Instagram		stfranchischurchvalleypark
Zoom		www.bit.ly/SFCzoom
Twitter		@FrancisValley
YouTube		St Francis Church Valley Park

Who's Who

Church Administrator:

Post vacant
admin@sfpv.org.uk , Tel:
02380271152

Church Cleaner: Ann Daly

(usual time to clean:
Saturday afternoon)

Junior Church Lead:

Debbie Reed -
juniorchurch@sfpv.org.uk

Youth Contact: Cliff

McClelland -
youth@sfpv.org.uk

Pastoral Lead and Prayer

Chain: Fiona Grove -
pastoral@sfpv.org.uk

Lead minister: Sarah
McClelland -

rev@sfpv.org.uk (Usual day
off Friday)

Curate: Joe Sweetnam -
curate@sfpv.org.uk (Day
off Friday)

Methodist minister: Sue
Keegan von Allmen

URC minister: Mark
Robinson

Church Council

Church Wardens: Alison Rhodes and Fiona Grove

Pro (Deputy) Warden and Gift Aid secretary: Geoff Roberts

Plus 1 vacant prowarden post

Safeguarding officer: Helen Kelso - safeguarding@sfpv.org.uk

Church Council Secretary: Liz Bolton

Treasurer: Andy Grove - treasurer@stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk

Church Council Members: Debbie Reed, Graham Shankland, Phil
Watts, Rogerio Ramos.

Plus 2 vacant posts

Deanery Synod Reps (ie Church of England Reps): Peter
Rhodes, Steve Williams and Brian King

Methodist Church rep: David Gurr

Plus 1 vacant post

URC Rep: Chris Hill.



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Would you like someone to pray with you?

God does extraordinary things when we pray. And prayer's not just a solitary activity, we're to pray for one another. Can we pray for you at the moment? Members of our prayer ministry team would be delighted to pray with you over the phone or on Zoom - please just ask; contact Sarah, Joe, or Fiona Grove in the first instance.

'Pray for one another, so that you may be healed.'

James 5: 16

Thanks for reading!

As ever this comes with my prayers and love in Christ.
Sarah

Sarah McClelland

Lead Minister, St Francis' Church.

A Local Ecumenical Partnership of the Church of England, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church.

Pilgrim's Close, Valley Park, Eastleigh SO53 4ST

www.stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk

rev@sfvp.org.uk

T: 023 8048 6298

Usual day off: Friday

This message was sent BCC to all on our church mailing list. If you'd prefer not to receive further mailings please let me know.