



St Francis Church
you're welcome here

18th November 2021

St Francis Church, Valley Park (virtually)

This week's newsletter



In transition

Last Sunday we thought about how the Israelites marked their transition into the promised land with a memorial of stones. It was designed to remind them how far they'd come and to prompt the question by later generations of how God had brought them there. And the theme of transition resonated!

As a church family it has been and still is a time of transition. We reflected that we now have the chance to share with Outreach Radio from time to time, and of how we have some friends who have joined us on Zoom recently. Doing church on Zoom has been a change for all of us and one that we're delighted to keep – and it's meant some changes in our service style. Some of us have joined to explore something more about who this God is – another sort of transition in faith.

Others of you have recently moved to the area – some from other counties but for a number of you it's been from other countries. We're thrilled you're with us and we realise that this is a time of change. We're so pleased to welcome friends from chandlers Ford URC – but we know there's pain in your transition as you have made the brave decision to close that church and find new church families.

And those of us who've been at St Francis for a while? Well, it's a time of change for us too. The service style's a bit different, we're still wearing masks, it's not just like it used to be. Some of you were here when you first moved into this new church building 30 years ago and you're still here! We're so glad we have you to remind us of the history of this church and to guide us.

Transition is tiring! We do well to acknowledge the changes. Maybe some of us need to mark the transition as the Israelites did – maybe not with stones but in other ways. If you're growing in faith, have you been baptised and confirmed? These are great ways to mark where we are in our journey with God. Maybe to transfer membership? There's no pressure but marking moments can help us to know our new place. Maybe to move into serving in a new way. Mark the transition – let me know how you'd like to do that.

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What's coming up at St Francis

Sunday 21st Nov, after 10am service: Fairtrade Stall

There'll be a stall after the morning service, just inside the door! Don't forget to place your Christmas orders with Angela.

Sunday 21st Nov 3pm Messy Church - BOXES

PLEASE!

A message from Joe: Please could people save up cardboard boxes of all sorts, large and small, for use in an activity at the next Messy Church. If you want to find out what they are for ... you will have to come along on Sunday 21st November at 3:00pm! Please could you keep them at home with you, and bring them along to church after the 10:00am service on the 21st.. If you have any queries, or want to know more about Messy Church please get in touch with me (curate@stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk). Many thanks in anticipation of your boxes!

Monday 22nd Nov, 10am: Morning Prayer

Join us in the building at 10am to share communion.

Monday 22nd Nov, 11-1230: Café

Come and join us and catch up together. Do you have a hobby? Bring it along!

Wednesday 24th Nov, 9-1030: Café

Come and join us - there'll be crafts for toddlers too!

Sunday 28th Nov, 6pm: Advent Service of Light

Starting in darkness and gradually lighting the church, join us as we begin the season of Advent with a reflective service.

Also on Zoom (bring your own candle) - see page 4

December: Christmas Services

Please do make a note of our Christmas Services coming up over December - see page 5.

Saturday 4th December: Valley Park Community Association Christmas Fayre.

See page 6.



Messy Church is this week!

Aimed at primary school age children and their families but everyone is welcome - join us on Sunday and invite your friends and neighbours.



Come carol singing!



Good Christian men (and women and children) rejoice! The time of carol singing is nearly here! There will be: Carols in church, Carols at café, Carols at Brendoncare, Carols at Messy church and Carols in the pub. The Cleveland Bay have already taken lots of table reservations for December 19th @ 6pm, of people who want to come and sing with us (you may have seen the posters), so **now's the time to decide if you'd like to be there too.** The plan is for a group of musicians and singers from St Francis to be positioned in the small area between the bookshelves and the fire. It's up a couple of small steps and therefore slightly separated from the rest of the pub with windows on 2 sides to allow for ventilation. Please email Sarah or Stephanie if you'll come and sing/play or if you have any queries.



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**Join us for a reflective service at the
start of Advent**

in person or on zoom (www.bit.ly/SFCzoom)

More details on our website:
www.stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk
or phone 02380271152

Advent service of light at St Francis Church, Valley Park

28th November 2021 6pm



Merry Christmas 2021

with love from
St Francis Church, Valley Park!

Nov 28, 6pm: Advent service of light*

Dec 12, 6pm: Carol Service at St Francis Church*

Dec 19, 6pm: Carols at the Cleveland Bay Pub

Dec 20, 12:30pm: Carols at the Café

Dec 22, 10am: Messy Christmas at Café

Dec 24, 3pm: Crib Service for all ages

Dec 24, 11:30pm: Midnight communion

Dec 25, 8:30am: Communion service

Dec 25, 10am: All age communion

*All in person; *also livestreamed*



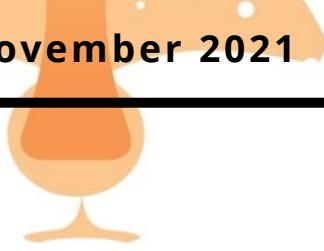
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Do join us, we'd
love to see you!

At the heart of Christmas



18th November 2021



VALLEY PARK XMAS FAYRE

SAT. 4TH
DECEMBER

2.30PM - 5PM

VALLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE

FACE PAINTING &
UNIQUE CRAFT STALLS.

FREE ENTRY

£3 TO SEE SANTA EMAIL PAULA
CEC@VALLEYPARKCOMMUNITY.CO.UK

SPONSORS:

Registered Charity
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CHANDLERS FORD

Underwood Opticians

Church Family News: Rachel King's Climb of Mt Kilimanjaro (14th-20th September 2021)



As many of you know, earlier this year I flew out to Tanzania, Africa, to climb Mt Kilimanjaro and take part in a record breaking attempt at the World's Highest Altitude Obstacle Course. This was a trip that was scheduled for 2020 but like many things, got postponed due to Covid.

With a summit of 5895m, Kilimanjaro is the highest freestanding mountain in the world. Over 6 days we hiked through rainforest, alpine desert and glacial planes. Some days we climbed to high altitude and then camped back at a lower altitude as this helps with acclimatisation. I felt very fortunate as nausea and headaches only hit me during the summit attempt and I was able to enjoy the rest of the trip sickness free.

The summit night was extremely challenging, setting off at 1am and climbing steeply for 5 hours, with only our headtorches to show the way. It felt like the night would never end and the wind brought the temperature to below freezing, causing my water to freeze. But eventually the sun rose and the summit felt in reach. After 6 hours and 21 minutes of slowly placing one foot in front of the other, I reached the summit. Surrounded by glaciers and some of my team mates it was an emotional and exhilarating feeling to have accomplished such a huge challenge. We had a quick photo and then descended into the crater.

Being allowed into the crater is very rare and required special permission from the government. It was here that I then worked my way through 10 obstacles to achieve a Guinness World Record! Once completed, the decent began, back down to camp and then the next day to the bottom of the mountain.

I would like to thank everyone who prayed for me (and the team) during the trip and all those who donated to YoungMinds to help me fundraise for the charity. My total now stands at £1540 and I am thrilled to be able to transfer this over to help make a difference in young people's lives.

If you would still like to donate then the link is:
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Rachel-King-91

Thank you again ☺

Rachel.



Current Covid guidelines at St Francis

3 wise
(and wonderful)
wardens



Here's where we are with current Covid restrictions. As we all know, there's no law to restrict us at the moment, so it falls to the incumbent, in discussion with wardens, to decide on the level of restrictions. And we're all in very different situations with different views - **it's a great opportunity to grow grace amongst us!**

Covid is becoming endemic in the population - we need to live with it. But it's still not the gift anyone wants for Christmas, especially not long Covid, and rates are high. So, here at St Francis, **we will continue to wear masks (if not exempt) at 0830 and 10am services**, in order to enable as many as possible to join us and feel safe. We'll continue to ventilate the building well, too, so please wrap up as the weather gets colder. We'll also continue to have coffee outside when the weather allows.

In meetings, it will be up to the group to agree whether or not masks are worn. If you are especially vulnerable, please arrive early and make sure the meeting leader knows your situation, so they can ask others to wear masks and enable a seat by the door. Please don't be shy to let us know what you need to be able to join us in person - and to recognise it may not be the same for everyone.

What if you've been in direct contact with a Covid case? Though you aren't legally obliged to isolate if vaccinated, please do stay away from church activities so that we can protect each other. I appreciate that those of us at/in schools don't have this luxury. But here in church we do - so let's carry on doing our best to help everyone feel safe, along the lines of Paul's advice to the Corinthians, in the context of eating meat or not: '**Since you are free to do as you please, be careful that this does not hurt a weak [immunologically speaking!] Christian. (1 Cor 8:9 NLT)**'

Giving at St Francis Church

Thank you so much!

Our Harvest appeal raised around £2000. We're so grateful for your generous response!

We believe that financial giving is a response to God's generosity to us, and a responsibility of regular members of our church family. We rely entirely on your donations to keep the church going and are especially dependent on regular giving through bank accounts, as this enables us to budget appropriately. We're able to substantially increase your gift if you pay tax, as we can reclaim the gift aid.

If you would like to set up regular giving, there are standing order forms at the back of the church, or they're available from our treasurer Andrew Grove: treasurer@sfvp.org.uk

We appreciate that you might not be in a position to give regularly at the moment. If you prefer, there's a basket for offerings on the table opposite the entrance door for cash, and you can donate online via our website or just here:

Donate here

Maybe you aren't in a position to donate at all at the moment. If that's you, thank you for reading this far, and please know that you are no less valued as a part of our church family. Please continue to pray for us, and let us know if you have specific material or prayer needs that we can help with at this time.

As a church we're about so much more than asking for money! And we also want to fulfill our call to be a blessing to each other and our surrounding community. Thank you so much for your part in that.

Worship for this week:

Sunday November 21st: Christ the King

8.30am Said Communion in the church building

10am: Morning Worship - in the building and on the usual Zoom link.

Leader at both services: Joe Sweetnam

Speaker at both services: Sarah McClelland

Theme: Exodus - Transformation on the journey: the day of atonement - Jesus is our scapegoat.

Reading: Leviticus 16:15 – 22 & 34

Live on Outreach radio this week? No.

3pm Messy Church.

**Activities for Under 11s provided at our 10am service: Junior Church is back
Join us for coffee after the 10am!**

Monday November 22nd

10am: Morning Prayer in the building

Services are in the church building - November 2021

Feel free to just come, no need to book.

Please wear a mask for services and keep to social distancing.

And wrap up now it's getting colder!

Or you can join on Zoom!

Catch up later!

Don't forget you can catch up
on our 10am service on
Facebook from Sunday pm or
our website from Monday.

Link for services

Here's the super quick link that
takes you to all of our Zoom
services and events:
www.bit.ly/SFCzoom

Exodus: Finding God on the Journey

Sunday mornings September-October-November 2021

05:09:21 Starting a journey

The reason and the relevance

12:09:21 Motivation for the journey

Freedom from captivity

19:09:21 Being released to journey

Passover

26:09:21 Power for the journey

Crossing the Red Sea

03:10:21 Provision for the journey - Harvest

Manna

10:10:21 Discoveries on the journey: who God is (1)

Access to God's presence - the tabernacle

17:10:21 Discoveries on the journey: who we are

Boundaries defined: The Ten commandments

24:10:21 Discoveries on the journey: who God is (2)

God calls Moses 'friend'

31:10:21 Companions on the journey

All Saints Day

07:11:21 Discoveries on the journey: who God is (3)

God describes his character

14:11:21 The past gives us bearings for the journey

Remembrance Sunday: The Israelites set up a memorial

21:11:21 Transformation on the journey

Christ the King: The day of atonement - Jesus is our scapegoat

28:11:21 Journey's end: the promised land

Advent Sunday: Jesus will return and make all things new

Points for prayer this week

From the World Council of Churches: East Timor (Timor Leste), Indonesia, Philippines.

- governments in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Timor Leste, that they will eradicate corruption, establish justice and peace, and work effectively for the wellbeing of all their people
- victims of violence, torture, drug and human trafficking, and human rights violations, that those responsible might be held accountable
- all those affected by earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural disasters, and for the rebuilding of communities afterwards
- ecumenical and interfaith cooperation to bring justice, peace and sustainability to these lands.

Our local Community:

Please pray for :

- those who live on Wellowbrook Close, Collingbourne Drive.
- For all who are in a time of transition - for strength and settling
- For all who will attend Messy church on Sunday, that they might experience a warm welcome
- For all on our prayer chain
- For our GP chaplaincy work and links with the surgery, including the Mindfulness Course taking place at church Monday nights
- That our café might be a place of welcome, connection and reconnection in our local community

St Francis Church information



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Answerphone



02380271152

Facebook



@stfrancisvp

Website



www.stfrancis-valleypark.org.uk

Instagram



stfrancischurchvalleypark

Zoom



www.bit.ly/SFCzoom

Twitter



@FrancisValley

YouTube



St Francis Church Valley Park

Church Council as of 25/4/21

Church Wardens: Alison Rhodes and Fiona Grove

Pro (Deputy) Warden: Debbie Reed (Plus 1 vacant prowarden post)

Gift Aid secretary: Geoff Roberts

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

Church Council Secretary: Jan Southern

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

Church Council Members: Rogerio Ramos, Liz Bolton, Caroline Emmins, Jan Southern

Plus 3 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.

Who's Who

Church Administrator:

Caroline James

admin@sfvp.org.uk , Tel:
02380271152

Church Cleaner: Ann Daly

(usual time to clean:
Saturday afternoon)

Junior Church Lead:

Debbie Reed -
juniorchurch@sfvp.org.uk

Youth Contact: Cliff

McClelland -
youth@sfvp.org.uk

Pastoral Lead and Prayer

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

Lead minister: Sarah

McClelland -
rev@sfvp.org.uk (Usual day
off Friday)

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

Methodist minister: Sue
Keegan von Allmen

URC minister: Mark
Robinson



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.