



WELCOME TO THE FOUNTAIN



The Ministry team letter has been written by Carolyn Annand, one of our Readers

Hi Everyone,

Here's hoping you all had a good Christmas and a good start to the New Year.

As I write this I am recovering from taking all the decorations down. It's rather a depressing job, removing all the signs of celebration and enjoyment.

Now they've all gone I realise how clear the house is. At first it seemed bare, but now there is space everywhere, and it's lovely.

Maybe we can create the same space in our hearts at the beginning of this New Year. Sometimes I feel that each new year is just same old same old but that is up to us. I haven't made any New Year's resolutions, but clearing the house has made me think about clearing my mind, sorting myself out a bit, maybe being a bit more efficient.

One of the ways a great many of us are not efficient is in communication. I have particularly noticed this with hospitals. Their communications seem to be muddled and confused. Sometimes my husband has been given two appointments for the same clinic on different days. Other times he has been sent home after appearing at 7 a.m. for an operation.

Even private hospitals fail in this way. Let us all make sure this year that we communicate well with everyone, so that we all know what each other is doing.

God bless

Carolyn

From the registers:



Baptised recently at St Francis:

Daniel William Elder, baptized on 17th January

Please pray for Daniel and for his family.

Rest In Peace:

Please pray for Margaret Barns, who died recently, and for those who mourn her passing.

CHOIR NOTES

Now that Advent and Christmas are over we were able to take a short and well-earned rest. I am, however, writing this just before our first rehearsal of the new term having planned music for the next two months, mapped out hymns to Easter, and planned with the Vicar and others the music programme for the rest of the year!

My thanks to all singers, Robin and parents for helping to make our two carol services such a musical success in December. Thanks too to some of the trebles who sang at midnight mass on Christmas eve, and were also there, bright-eyed on Christmas morning with the full choir for the 10.00am service! It was lovely to see some of our young men singing over Christmas, having successfully completed their first term at university.

We welcome back Theo Gill as a bass this month and Edgar Jasko, whose voice has started to change, will be singing alto from now on.

Our four new probationers start in the choir – two girls, Sofia and Catherine Charlesworth (our second set of twins in the choir), and two boys – Callum Hutchinson and Matthew Dunstan (brother of Annabel already in the choir). We wish them luck in their singing journey over the next few years.

Richard Harrison



A Taizé service was held at St Francis on January 24th. It was organised by the diocese, to give young people a chance to experience the Taizé style of worship before committing themselves to joining the Taizé pilgrimage which will take place in the summer, led by Bishop Michael. We were very lucky to be able to take part in this worship as well.

Taizé style prayer is a unique experience. The beauty of the music and the simplicity of the songs lead the worshipper into the prayerful silence of their hearts. It is a reminder that the worship of heaven has neither beginning nor end and it is with which we join. Through repeating the same song over and over again, the Word of God can enter and dwell in the hearts of those taking part.

The simplicity of the worship is intended to lead to a place of encounter with God. Therefore a period of silence is at the heart of all Taizé prayer.

The service was held in the Lady Chapel, which was candle lit. The choruses were led by guitar, flute and voice. Many of those attending were experienced in this style of worship and harmonies during the choruses came naturally to them. The service was meaningful and contemplative and opened a window into a different way of having a relationship with God.

News from our SSM curate to be, who will join us after her ordination in June:



Hi, I am Liz . . . and I am very much looking forward to joining you all at St Francis from July!

I am grateful to Jenny for offering me the chance to introduce myself and my family, and to let you know a little about us - and about what I have been doing up until now! . . .

I live in Hatfield, and have done so for the last 43 years, during which time I have worshipped at St Etheldreda's church - in fact I grew up in the Rectory as my father was the Rector there until 2000. I went to school in Hatfield, at Countess Anne, and then Hatfield Girls' School, before going off to Music College to study for my music degree. This was followed by a PGCE course in order to teach – Music, with Special Educational Needs as my second subject. For the last 27 years I have been Head of Music in 2 secondary schools . . . 10 years in one, and the last 17 years at the second – where I also led SMSC within the school (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education).

I met my husband John when we toured together with the English Brass Group back in the 1990s, and we have now been married for 22 years. He is a french horn player, and he teaches brass for the County Music Service. We have two wonderful children – Henry who is 19, and is currently having a gap year after finishing school last summer, and Flo (Florence) who is 16, and in the sixth form enjoying her 'A' Level studies.

Having felt the call to ministry for a considerable number of years, I started training with the Eastern Region Ministry Course in 2013. I remained at St Eths for the first two years of my training – where I was particularly involved with children and young families worship and ministry. Then, in order to gain experience within a different parish context, I moved to the Welwyn team – which is where I am currently completing my final year of training . . . leading up to ordination in July. The last two and a half years with ERMC have been amazing – it is a truly wonderful course. Training ‘part-time’ (!) whilst in full time employment, and with a young family, certainly has its challenges, but the richness of learning, experience, and diversity within the course has been incredible.

Having recently left my full time teaching post, I am currently supply teaching, which thankfully allows a little more flexibility with regard to time for this final year of training – and I am enjoying the experience and opportunity of teaching in a variety of different schools within the county.

Music has always been a very important part of my life – both teaching, and playing (since I took up the trombone at the age of 8!). I still play when time allows, as a member of a brass group, and also enjoy composing and arranging, and of course listening to, a wide range of music. I also enjoy creative activities, and photography, and have always had a love of cooking – which I find a great way to unwind. I also love to read – both to study and for pleasure.

It is with great excitement that I look forward to getting to know you, and to being with you at St Francis.

SHOE BOXES 2015

Many thanks to everyone who filled a shoe box for the Refugee Council's Christmas Party. Stuart Cunliffe was able to deliver 33 from St Francis this year.



For a couple of years the staff there have been using our ‘suggestions’ list and making up boxes as well. This year they were contacted by the City firm Bloomberg’s who wanted to support the Council. They suggested filling shoe boxes as we do, and sent them the list we use. They received 160 gift-laden boxes!

Hopefully Bloomberg's will continue next year - we certainly will. It has become a central part of their Christmas offering. Start collecting your shoeboxes and gifts, let's see if we can make 50 in 2016!

Jan Nafzger

News of some old friends:

I'm sure many readers will remember the Atkinson family, who were here whilst Glen was our Youth Worker at the end of the 1900s/beginning of the 2000s. We have kept in touch with them over the years, and thought a brief update might be of interest.

The children are all now grown up: Joshua completed a degree in Physical Geography and Geology at Edge Hill University in 2014, and Rebekah is studying medicine in Birmingham (now in her 3rd year). Samuel, having achieved good grades in his A levels, has an unconditional offer at Sterling University for next October. Bethany did well in her GCSEs, and is now studying for A levels in Biology, Psychology, PE and English Language.

The younger three have all become very successful swimmers and Samuel, particularly, could be destined for international success. He has the opportunity to train in New Zealand this Spring. As you can imagine, Glen and Mandy have spent many hours travelling to swimming events around the country and then many hours sitting poolside whilst the children have been competing or training, and it really does seem that Sam has the potential to represent his country.

If you are interested in finding out a bit more about what Sam hopes to do, you can find out more on <https://www.gofundme.com/getsamtonewzealand>, which his girlfriend has set up to support him.

Janet and Anthony Packer

Worlds Apart?

In the run up to Christmas, I wonder if anyone else watched some morning programmes on BBC1 called 'Sister Rita to the Rescue'? The series showed the excellent work of a Centre in inner city Manchester, run by Sister Rita (aka Attila the Nun). One aspect of the Centre's work was running a food bank, which provided much needed food for those who could not afford to feed themselves or their families. As I watched the programme, I was amazed by the resilience and energy of Sister Rita, a nun in her late sixties, who seemed to work tirelessly to bring comfort, companionship, advice and sustenance to that community. I couldn't help feeling that this inner city environment, with its high rise flats, great unemployment and much poverty, was far removed from us here in Welwyn Garden City. But of course, there is poverty and need here in our town. There are actually two food banks operating in our area, one of which we at St Francis support with a basket in the porch in which people can leave donations. I decided to find out more about this particular food bank, how it operates and perhaps how we could do more to help. So, what follows is what I have found out about the food bank which is open each Wednesday morning at the New Zion Christian Fellowship in Cole Green Lane.

The New Zion Christian Fellowship Food Bank

This Food Bank has been going for six years. It started as a result of the Lord speaking to Peter (Pastor) in the middle of the night saying "feed the poor" and He, the Lord, has continually supplied food and clothes from many different sources ever since. There is another smaller food bank in the town, which has links with the Trussell Trust (a charity which aims to open Foodbanks across the UK and provide emergency food parcels). The New Zion foodbank operates in a slightly different way; one major difference is that clients can choose their foods themselves whereas the Trussell Trust Food bank gives bags of food that have already been selected. It is open between 9am and 11am each Wednesday morning, and anyone is welcome to drop in and see it in action.

The New Zion food bank regularly gets donations of non-perishables from local churches (including St Francis) and also Sainsbury's and Morrisons. They may also be lucky enough to get bulk donations from other sources. Once the donations have come in, they are sorted by volunteers into five different tables: carbohydrates (pasta, rice etc), proteins (beans, tuna), tinned fruit and veg, and miscellaneous (eg pasta sauce, cooking oil, biscuits) and drinks (eg squash, instant coffee). Once clients have checked in and handed in their voucher(s), which they will have been given by front-line services, they are free to collect 3 items per voucher from each table. There is a band of volunteers on hand to help, show anyone round who is there for the first time etc. When we went there were also a couple of volunteers from an American company, Acoa, who had begun to help by serving refreshments during the run up to Thanksgiving, and had continued with this once Thanksgiving had passed.

On a regular morning, the Food Bank would expect to see about 50 clients, but when we went it was the last occasion before Christmas which is usually their busiest session of the year. After an hour of opening they had already welcomed 54 clients with 79 vouchers between them. As it was the pre-Christmas session there was also an additional table of 'festive fayre' from which clients were able to choose a further three items.

You might expect that the atmosphere would have been frenetic, but it was very calm and everyone there was in good spirits. Numerous children were playing quietly with odd treats of sweets available, there was tea and coffee if you wanted it, and a gentleman on a keyboard playing carols. Outside, someone's carrier bag had burst, but another client was quick to assist with another bag. It was a sobering thought that this little church was carrying on its work so quietly and successfully on what is deemed to be the busiest day in the retail calendar (as the traffic jams into the town, and as the long queue at the farm shop for our turkey proved!)

Our visit has certainly made us think about supporting the Food Bank more. One or two additional purchases in our weekly shop, maybe taking up a BOGOF offer and donating the second item would be simple ways to help. I did ask which items are in the greatest demand and was told that drinks (squash and coffee), biscuits, tinned fruit and pasta sauce are amongst the most popular items.

Janet Packer

St Francis Reading Group

Are you interested in getting back into reading? Trying some new sorts of literature? Or just fancy a cup of tea and a chat about your favourite book? Then come along to the St Francis reading group!

We meet every one or two months (depending on the length of the book!) for tea, cake and a good go at getting to grips with a range of books.

So far our reading has ranged from *Jane Eyre* to *The Tempest* to *1984*. We meet next on February 9th, at 16:00, to talk about Jann Martel's *Life of Pi*. All suggestions for future reading are very welcome.

For more information, contact Rev'd Josh Young (revdjoshiyoung@hotmail.co.uk)

SENIOR WATCH

We have a growing number of older residents in Hertfordshire, many of whom live alone. While most crimes affect younger people, many older residents have accrued savings or receive income from pensions, so some criminals target this using tactics such as rogue trading, frauds and scams.

Hertfordshire's hugely successful Neighbourhood Watch alerts around 100,000 members to current local crime trends, providing crime prevention and other safety advice, but many older people don't have email access, so aren't able to directly receive our messages.

In order to reach out to our older residents, we are seeking the help of caring local people who have regular contact with older residents, and asking them to share information and advice to help keep them safe.

To achieve this, we have created "Senior Watch". We would like to invite local senior residents to join, and also any other residents who have older neighbours or relatives, or who care for an elderly person in a personal or professional capacity.

Senior Watch will work alongside Neighbourhood Watch, but with messages specifically for our senior residents. For more details and to register, visit www.owl.co.uk/herts/senior

Short Tales from Stockholm

For the past five years I've been going to Stockholm every December to appear in a professional production of A Christmas Carol at the Maxim Teatern. The Beatles played there in 1963, so we're in exalted company. The management organise the accommodation, and usually lay on certain functions and events on our days off. I think that this year has been the best yet, for me!

I play Bob Cratchit, Old Joe, Headmaster and sundry other roles, and because I am familiar with the production, it does mean that I can relax a bit more, and get out and about.

On Sunday December 13th, we met outside our apartment block at 6.45am, and went to the St Lucia celebrations in Stockholm's cathedral.

Background: Lucia was a young Christian girl who would secretly bring food to the persecuted Christians in the catacombs under the city of Rome. She wore candles on her head so that her hands were free to carry things.

The choir consist of young people and children, one of whom plays Lucia with candles on her head. All the other choir members carry candles.

One of the Cratchit family, my fictional daughter Belinda, was part of the choir that sang beautiful songs and carols, acapella. Alba Wadman was so excited that we were there, and it was one of the highlights of my stay. As a former chorister, I've always had an appreciation of choral singing and its power to inspire and evoke emotion. The St Lucia celebration certainly did that.

On Tuesday December 15th we were again invited to a St Lucia celebration at the British Ambassador's residence. The choir was from the International School in Stockholm. The British Ambassador David Cairns and his family were so friendly and welcoming, although his son Tom beat me fairly convincingly in a game of pool.

The following Saturday the whole Cairns family turned up on bikes to a performance of ACC at the Maxim Teatern. They were very complimentary and hopefully we will get to see them next year, and I can improve my pool skills and beat young Cairns!(I learned to play at a Methodist Church Snooker and Pool Hall in Haverfordwest, but have clearly forgotten the nuances of pool play learned in a smoke filled room!!).

Christmas Eve is the most important day of celebration for the Swedes, and some of us went to a Catholic Midnight Mass, which was in English. However we came away very disappointed, as the priest conducted the service in a very distant, cold and unfriendly way. It really made me appreciate quite how lucky we are with our clergy at St Francis.

Christmas Day was spent at the Swedish Director's house in Farsta Strand. I have known Pernilla Isedal for almost twenty years, since when she first appeared in ACC. (Every year we also get to see her on Swedish television, as she is the floor manager for the Stockholm Nobel Prize ceremony).

Christmas at Pernilla's was a wonderfully festive occasion, with a "julbord" (buffet) of meats and fish to make you drool. I have never been a huge fan of herring, but it cannot be avoided, along with gravlax and smoked salmon!!

Even the Christmas games have fishy overtones, with "Flip The Kipper" being amongst the most popular, with boisterous British actors.

All too soon, it was time to fly back home. In our four week stay, we experienced no frost or snow...til the night before we were due to leave!! But of course that is manna from heaven to the Swedes, and our travel plans were unaffected. We arrived at Arlanda airport at 07.00am, and already I was thinking about my return visit next year, and how I can improve my pool playing skills!

Clive Marlowe

OUR LENT PROJECT 2016 **to support** **Y-CARE INTERNATIONAL**

This charitable organisation delivers practical help directly to young people internationally and in the UK & Ireland. Y Care International are working to create opportunities in enterprise and skills for employment, improving health, justice and resilience in poorer countries around the world.

Y Care works with local YMCAs in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and in the Middle East to build a better life for young people. Encouraging youngsters to volunteer to work overseas in some truly challenging areas is an enormous task for any organisation, but the benefits for those that go to do this work are life changing, and for those people and countries that they help are inestimable.

This is an introduction to the area of contribution we can make during our giving this Lent. We have chosen to support Sierra Leone in particular this year, where the recovery from the Ebola crisis has started --- with rebuilding of schools for academic education alongside psychosocial counselling, as so many youngsters have lost family members --- teaching about farming in order to grow their own food ---building dwellings to try to eliminate the slum areas in so many different communities --- and thereby resurrect the community spirit so that people can rebuild respect and care for each other, alongside their recovery from trauma and grief – no small task.

There are vocational training centres in Kenema, Bo and Freetown, and where schools now have updated sanitary facilities and basic hand-washing is taught to prevent further outbreaks of Ebola or other infectious diseases.

There is an urgent need to help young people rebuild their lives and those of the people around them. Y-Care International is working to establish sustainable solutions to the long-term effects of Ebola in communities like Sierra Leone and West Africa. Vital investment is needed now to help communities recover from the Ebola crisis. Here are just a few examples of how we can support this work:

†	£8	could buy a Tailor's Kit
†	£24	could buy a Carpentry Kit
†	£15	could buy a Cook's Kit
†	£45	could buy a Mechanic's Kit
†	£77	could provide Disaster Risk Reduction training for 10 young people
†	£93	provides a business start-up kit for a vocational training graduate
†	£370	could provide Vocational and Life Skills Training for 5 young people

You can find out more on the website www.ycareinternational.org

Wardens' Report September-October 2015

The PCC will be reviewing in early February our focus for 2016. Meanwhile our Mission Action Plan goals; once again:

1. To increase our engagement with Secondary aged children, including our own uniformed organisations
2. To recruit more volunteers in all areas of our church life
3. To offer more prayer and study opportunities and measure their success
4. To develop a plan for a more formal pastoral network by Easter 2015
5. To embrace and achieve our 80th Anniversary Projects activities as a whole

1. To increase our engagement with Secondary aged children, including our uniformed organizations

We had our best-ever Christmas Tree Festival in December, with over eighty trees, more visitors and more money raised than in any previous year. We had excellent contributions from Scouts, Beavers and Rainbows, with trees, outdoor games and a massive effort in the kitchen. The Festival was followed by a very successful schools week with approximately 400 children being involved.

We also enjoyed another wonderful Nativity from the combined Youth and Children's Church groups with all its heart-warming moments and, as tradition demands, anxiety-inducing but conquered glitches; well done to Zoe and her large team of helpers! Special well done to Jenny for giving a practical demonstration of how to combine liturgical leadership with triumph over electricity supply problems. Our Christmas services were a real joy: great music at the Advent Carols, the Nine Lessons, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day. There was a lovely atmosphere at the Christingle/crib services and a very successful first (for us) family carol service that was extremely well attended .

2. To recruit more volunteers in all areas of our church life

This goal has not been one of our stronger points this year. Despite so many people contributing so much time we are struggling in some very important areas, particularly for helpers with Youth and Children's Church. Clare and Chris Lawson have been over the list of sidespeople to check who is willing/able to continue and will be looking for more help here too.

3. To offer more prayer and study opportunities and measure their success

Carolyn ran a very successful series of Advent courses in December and we look forward to a guided retreat in February as well as our Lent course.

4. To develop a plan for a more formal pastoral network by Easter 2015

No progress on this front; in the 'too difficult for energy available' category.

On our fifth goal we continue to do well: to embrace and achieve the 80th Anniversary Project's activities as a whole.

There is no doubt we had a great year, with so many people in our community contributing so whole-heartedly. We set out to celebrate, and we have certainly done this. We set out to make ourselves more active and visible in the community, and our concerts, fetes, festivals, Joseph and many family activities have certainly done that. We also set out to refurbish the church itself and continue the work on the church hall as well, and Stuart and Brian have led a magnificent effort here.

Our finances are holding up; it looks as though we will show a small surplus for the year, our charitable giving has been strong with over £13000 donated, and some £10,000 raised for the 80th Anniversary fund.

In 2016 I think most of us have a quieter year in mind!

Other matters

This section comes with a mixed metaphor warning:

There is of course some argument about whether Advent is really a penitential season, while it is generally accepted that it is a time of devout and joyful expectation. Stuart, as ever, has been a model of seasonal devotion:

Devout and joyful expectation, followed by incarnation of our expectations in the form of skilled workmen: new windows in the office and hall, and the first phase of sorting out the drains.

Devout expectation with incarnation anticipated soon: phase two of the drains, more gutters and roof repairs.

Devout expectation, possible incarnation depending on PCC decision: replacement of the windows in the hall lantern

Devout prayer without expectation: the return of the Lesser Spotted Locksmith, now presumed either to be a migratory species or one prone to early hibernation.

The Warden Team

'Cooking Curate's' Recipes

Something a bit different this month! As some of you will know, I am fascinated by the history of food, and the effect that it has on the lifestyles and cultures of people and nations. Recently my reading has turned to the foods that would have been available in Jesus' time, and with that in mind, here are some recipes for a first-century Palestinian feast!

Flatbreads

Makes 8 – give it a go, it's much easier than you think!

Ingredients:

500g plain flour

1 tbsp salt

250ml milk

100g butter

Splash of olive oil

Method:

Heat the butter and milk gently in a pan until the butter has melted.

In a large bowl, add the milk and butter mix to the flour and salt, and knead into a smooth dough.

Wrap in cling film and leave at room temperature for half an hour.

When the dough has rested, place on to a lightly floured surface and cut into 8 equal pieces.

Roll each piece very thin (you should almost be able to see through the dough).

Don't worry about them being strange shapes, this won't affect the taste!

Place a large frying pan over a medium to high heat, add a drop of olive oil and then rub all over the pan with a sheet of kitchen roll.

One at a time, cook the flatbreads in the pan for about 90 seconds on either side, until the dough is starting to get crisp and brown, and you can see air bubbles forming inside the dough.

Beef and barley stew

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

1kg beef, with bones if possible (I tend to use short rib, shin or oxtail, but any cut of stewing beef would work fine)
1 tsp ground dill
1 tsp dried rosemary
1 tsp dried sage
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp salt
1 tsp cracked black pepper
2 onions, sliced
1 carrot, halved and sliced
2 turnips, cut into bite-size chunks
2 sticks celery, diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 bay leaves
100g pearl barley
500g beef stock

Method:

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Combine all dried herbs and spices with salt and pepper, and rub over beef with a splash of olive oil.

In a pan (or ideally a casserole dish that can be heated on the hob), brown the beef on all sides and then set aside.

In the same pan, cook the onion, carrot, turnip and celery for about 10 mins, until they are starting to soften.

Add the garlic and cook for a further 2 mins.

Add the bay leaves and pearl barley and stir for 1 minute.

Place the beef back in the pan, add the beef stock and cook in the oven for 3 hours (stirring every hour). When the barley is cooked through and the beef is falling off the bone, then it is ready.

Lentil pottage

I am told that this is likely to be the dish that Jacob sold to Esau for his birthright – I'll leave you to decide whether it was worth it!

Ingredients:

1 onion, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
200g split red lentils
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp mustard powder
1 bay leaf
1 tsp salt
500ml chicken stock

Method:

Over a medium heat, cook the onion in a little olive oil until soft and translucent (about 10 mins).

Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add the lentils and the rest of the ingredients and cook, uncovered, for about half an hour, stirring occasionally.

If the lentils start to look too dry, add a little more stock. When they are soft but still with a little bite, then the dish is ready.

Braised cucumber

I had never really cooked cucumber before, but I really like this dish. If you haven't cooked cucumber either, give it a try!

Ingredients:

2 cucumbers
150ml chicken stock
1 tbsp fresh mint
1 tbsp fresh dill

Method:

Peel the cucumbers, cut in half and scrape out the seeds.
 Cut into bite-size chunks.
 Fry cucumber in a little olive oil for 2 mins.
 Add stock, bring to a simmer and braise for 10 mins.
 Halfway through this (after 5 mins) add the mint, dill and some seasoning.
 Serve when the cucumbers are starting to soften but still have quite a firm texture.

Hummus**Ingredients:**

1 tin chickpeas, strained
 2 tbsp tahini (sesame seed paste)
 2 cloves garlic
 1 tbsp ground cumin
 1 tsp paprika
 Juice of 1 lemon
 50ml olive oil
 Salt and pepper

Method:

Combine all ingredients in a food processor until smooth (this may need a bit more oil).
 Check seasoning and enjoy!

Garlic yoghurt dip**Ingredients:**

6 tbsp plain yoghurt
 1 clove garlic, crushed
 Juice of half a lemon
 Pinch of sea salt

Method:

Stir together until combined – makes a wonderful light addition to lots of dishes.

New St Francis Women's Group

A quarterly get together for women of all ages. Enjoy an evening of both relaxation and uplifting activities: music, art, literature, crafts. Bring a friend or come and make some new ones.

Following a PCC discussion about our Mission Action Plan it was suggested that a Women's Group would benefit our church and its members as well as attracting members of the wider community.

A Women's Group would fit with MAP Priorities 1. Effective promotion of God's love within the wider community (including ministry of welcome outside the church) and 2. Fostering and developing faith, both individual and within our church and parish. It also links to Goal 3, To offer more prayer and study opportunities and measure their success.

The initial discussion generated many ideas and as such the sessions will not follow a set format, although they will all consist of refreshments at some point.

Future meetings planned are:

22nd April Crafty Night 8pm St Francis Church

Cake and crafts, crochet, quilting, painting, doodling.
 Find a hidden talent and/or share your skill.

15th July A Musical Evening 8pm St Francis Church

An in-house re-engineering of an all-time favourite anthem,
 Accompanied by a good amount of nibbles and giggles.

7th October Friday Night Book Club 8pm St Francis Church

A 'Wine & Spine' evening with cheesy bites and good reads.

(Dates may change due to availability of a suitable space to hold our meeting but we will give as much notice as possible if this proves necessary)

So please make it a date to join us. If you could let us know you are coming by emailing **thewomensgroup_wgc@gmail.com** it will help us with catering, but it's not essential. For the Facebookers amongst you, we have a closed page; just search for The Women's Group (don't forget the apostrophe).

Alison Paterson

The inaugural meeting of the new St Francis Women's Group took place on Friday January 22nd .

The Parish Room was filled to maximum capacity by about 35 ladies who represented a wide cross section of the St Francis community. As the group arrived, they were able to chat and get to know those around them, with a welcoming drink before the evening started.

Alison Paterson explained that the formation of the group had come out of a long felt need for the women of St Francis to have the chance to meet together and how the format of the evening is still evolving. Input from those who attended was strongly encouraged, because the organisers very much want the group to reflect the needs of its members.

The meeting started with a short, thought provoking video clip and then there was the opportunity to divide into smaller groups to discuss some aspects of the issues raised by the film. Fortunately there was additional space available in both the cellar and the clergy vestry, otherwise, because the group was so well attended, it would have been very difficult to move into the discussion groups let alone hear within the individual groups if all had remained in the Parish Room! The groups looked at a number of issues and were led by members of the planning group.

After the period of discussion everyone returned to the Parish Room where there was a chance to continue chatting before the evening ended. Jenny concluded the evening with a prayer.

If you made it to the first meeting I hope, like me, you will want to go along to the next one. My own crafty skills are very limited but I'm sure that I will be made welcome despite that!

If you didn't make it to the first meeting, please think about coming along to the next one. You will be assured of a warm welcome and good company.

Janet Packer

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Verger	Mr Keith Crabb keith.crabb@ntlworld.com	324330
PCC Secretary	Mrs Jan Nafzger thenafzgers@waitrose.com	331880
PCC Treasurer	Mr Dougie Agnew marciaagnew@waitrose.com	321854
Parish Admin	Mrs Pui San Apling admin@stfranciswgc.org.uk	694191
Electoral Roll	Mrs Janet Packer j_packer@tiscali.co.uk	321243
Membership Fund Treasurer	Mr Richard Blanch RichardBlanch@aol.com	322166
Servers	Mr Anthony Packer anthonyfpacker@hotmail.com	321243
Women's Group	Mrs Alison Paterson thewomensgroup_wgc@gmail.com	329012
Men's Group	Mr David Buck dbatwgc@tesco.net	336827

Sacristan	Mrs Jan Nafzger thenafzgers@waitrose.com	331880
Magazine Contributions	Mrs Janet Packer j_packer@tiscali.co.uk	321243
Magazine Distribution	Mrs Janet Packer j_packer@tiscali.co.uk	321243
Web Site Administrator	Mrs Montse Day montse.day@live.co.uk	322380
Church Hall Bookings	Via the Parish Office admin@stfranciswgc.org.uk	694191
Guides, Brownies & Rainbows	Mrs Margaret Breese m.breese@btinternet.com	01438 718702
Scouts, Cubs & Beavers	Carl Davidson Carl.davidson@1st-wgc-scouts.org.uk	07907703387
Church Cleaning	Contact the Churchwardens	
Parish Coffee	Mrs Susan Welton	323894
Church Flowers	Mrs Diane Hemmings	335645
Friends of St Francis	Mrs Jan Nafzger thenafzgers@waitrose.com	331880
Children's Society	Mrs Kate McQuillen knafzger@hotmail.com	371215
Youth & Children's Church	Contact a member of the Ministry Team	
Safeguarding Coordinator	Mrs Janet Packer j_packer@tiscali.co.uk	321243 07814417518
Toddle Time Play Group	Contact the Parish Office	694191
Coffee For All	Mr David Buck dbatwgc@tesco.net	336827
Lifts to Church	Mrs Denise Crabb denise.crabb@ntlworld.com	324330
Sunday Readings	Mrs Jennifer Witt jandjwitt@uwclub.net	265738
Church Linen	Mrs Pamela Hawkins	324833
Thursday Lunches	Rev'd Josh Young revdjoshiyoung@hotmail.co.uk	01582947145