



WELCOME TO THE FOUNTAIN



The Ministry Team letter has been written by Joan Gilbert, our Reader in Training .

I'm writing this on a Sunday evening toward the beginning of September. It was a lovely day, warm and clear, with that deep brilliant blue of an autumn sky (when it's blue at all). Today Vince and I went to what I don't doubt will be our last open garden of the year. It was cold this morning. As you read this, summer will have been over by some weeks.

Autumn will bring, or maybe for some of them by now has brought, various holidays and events to our St. Francis community, and they're more or less "churchy". Some of them don't seem churchy at all, except that they may also be fundraisers. We have, or have had, the Barn Dance, and the Harvest Festival Service the next morning. There's our patronal festival, the feast of St. Francis at the beginning of October. There's a Women's Group meeting. We have the Fiddlers Two concert later in the month. Then All Saints and All Souls at the beginning of November, and the Rock and Roll dance later in November. And I'm sure that's not all.

It would be easy to look at a list like that and think, "Well, sure, Harvest and the Feast of St Francis and All Saints. But what's holy about a barn dance? Or the rock and roll party? Besides, it's just for fun; it doesn't really matter."

That's up to us, isn't it? Surely part of it is being the community of Christ together.

We forge bonds over food and drink and music and dance that are going to make a difference when somebody needs support, or when we need to deal with frustration or conflict. And we will need to.

So how can we make it matter? How is it the body of Christ in action?

The first thing must be to show up. Come to what you can. Is there somebody you don't know very well, or don't think you have much in common with? Or even somebody that aggravates you? (Odds are pretty good you annoy them too, as it happens.) Am I the only one who mostly gravitates toward people I already know well or feel comfortable with?

The body of Christ is just as real over food and drink and music and dance on Saturday night as it will be in church on Sunday morning. We are the love of God one to another, wherever and whenever we meet, and we carry it out into the world. That is our business as Christians.

Prayers for us all,



From the registers:

Recently Baptised:

Freddie Stephen James Jackson
Chloe Obianuju Chinwendu Okonkwo
Both baptised on 18th September
Please pray for both of these children and their families.

Rest In Peace:

Please pray for :

Barbara Mildred Sharp
John Douglas Hawkins
Gladys Curtis

All of whom have died recently, and for those who mourn their passing.

They've arrived!!

You will recall that in the April/May edition of *The Fountain* there was an article describing how some 130 books that were surplus to the second hand book stall we run at the Christmas Tree Festival and Summer Fete had been given to Mercy Ships* to supplement the crew's library on the *Africa Mercy* (the only non-governmental hospital ship in the world). After a long journey by sea, via Rotterdam where they were put into a container with the many other items being sent out, they finally arrived in mid-August, and the following e-mail was received from the ship's librarian.

Hi,

Just wanted to let you know that the books have arrived safely to the ship!! I can't thank you enough for such a wonderful collection of novels in such fabulous condition!! What a blessing for our crew!! It may take me some months to get them on the shelves, mainly due to space issues, as I need to get rid of some other books. I was very excited to see the collection of James Patterson novels too!! [one of her favourite authors] 😊😊

Thank you for thinking of our organisation and please pass on our sincere thanks to St Francis Church as well!! Our crew will relish some lovely, fresh novels!!

We are on our way to Benin, just a few days out before we begin our next outreach in Cotonou, Benin! Sailing has been very calm and peaceful!

Thank you again for the amazing generosity of St Francis Church!

Jodie Rothwell

P.S We had shipyard in South Africa [for its annual inspection] this year. Most likely back to the Canary Islands next year! 😊

The ship docked on 18th August, and is now serving the people of Benin.

* *The Lighthouse, 12 Meadway, Stevenage. www.mercyships.org.uk.*

Work with Children and Families

Hi I'm Nikki, Children and Families' Worker based here at St Francis on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sunday services. I've been in post since April this year and am really enjoying it! I've been involved in Youth and Children's Church for the last 5 years. I grew up in Welwyn Garden City and got married to my husband, Gareth, here at St Francis 4 years ago this month. We both live in Letchworth in our lovely 3 bedroom house which we are currently doing up. When I'm not at church I am a nanny three days a week to two beautiful little girls in Hitchin.

Since I started my job here I have been involved in various different events, sessions and have met lots of different families. We hosted the Teddy Bears' picnic and our 'Come and Play' sessions during the summer holidays, all of which were very popular with 45 children and parents attending each event.

Thank you to our fantastic volunteers and with the support of the Ministry team we provide lots of different types of activities for a variety of age groups here at St Francis.

Toddle Time: We run a weekly Toddler group called Toddle Time and we meet on Wednesdays 10-11.30. We provide a variety of arts and crafts, imaginative play, soft play and various toys and play experiences to explore. We also have a dedicated baby area as well. We provide tea, coffee and biscuits for grown ups and then at 11.10-11.30 we have healthy snack and water for little ones followed by a story and song time. £1.50 per adult and child. 50p additional children.

Cynthia, our refreshments volunteer, is instrumental to making sure all our parents are kept smiling with a cup of tea and a biscuit!!

Shake and Shimmy: Our new under 5's musical group launching this month!! Every other Friday term time we will host a music/dance and song time session for Parents with their under 5's. 10-45-11.45. £1 per family. So why not come and join us for a fun music and movement session!

Café Church: We are starting a new discussion group for parents with children under 5. Set Friday mornings in October and November 10.45-12 we will be have a tea/coffee/biscuits and the chance to chat in a group with one of our Ministry team whilst I provide a variety of activities for your under fives.

Messy Church: Every third Wednesday of the month we have our themed Messy church session. Children from 3 years up until year 6. 3.30pm-5.15. We provide snack, arts and crafts, interactive story and song time followed by a cooked dinner. £3 per adult and 1 child. Additional adult or child £1. Our dedicated team of volunteers make this session such fun we truly wouldn't be able to do it with them!!

Youth and Children's Church: Every Sunday we host age-related activities for children and young people, from aged 2 and a half upwards, during our 9.15 service. Its a great place to make new friends and get involved in your local community. We have different arts and crafts/interactive stories and discussion time. During school holidays we have one group for all ages. Our volunteers work really hard to provide a fun and interactive session and we really appreciate and value each and every one of them!

I'm really excited this term to see our new groups launch and to continue to watch our existing groups grow and flourish. Without the support of volunteers we really wouldn't be able to continue the amazing work that has already been put in place.

So this is where I ask you, as part of our congregation, to think about whether you are able to spare some time to support Youth and Children's Church or our monthly Messy church group. Please email me nikkiclaresfranciswgc@outlook.com. to find out more.

Together we can continue to make a difference to our children's lives!

Nikki Clare

Carol Sharp sent this following Barbara's funeral in August:

Over 100 people attended Barbara Sharp's funeral at St Francis on 8th August, which was a intimate family occasion, conducted by retired priest Jurgen Bridstrup, who had known Barbara for over 40 years. The church was decorated with arrangements of garden flowers, many from Barbara's garden.

The family would like to thank everyone for all the donations they gave in her memory, to the charity she supported for so long and with so much passion - Save the Children. Barbara fundraised tirelessly for the charity over 40 years, and was chair of the WGC branch for over 30 years.

A grand total of £822.44 was raised and with gift aid of £61.25 that's £883.69 to help children in need around the world. Barbara would have been so pleased. She also left £1000 to the charity in her will, and the same amount to St Francis Church and Isabel Hospice.

Barbara was a long standing resident of WGC and lived in Russellcroft for 53 years.

The Revd Janet Mackenzie became The Venerable Janet Mackenzie on 6th September when she was 'collated' as the Archdeacon of Hertford, a member of the senior clergy in St Albans Diocese and the most senior woman in ministry in the diocese.

The service of collation, led by the Bishop of St Albans at St Andrew's and St George's Church, Stevenage, marks the beginning of an Archdeacon's ministry. Please pray for her as she takes on this new role.

Choir Notes

We had a lovely time on Choir Week at Winchester this year and a huge thank you is due to all who were involved and helped in any way. The following article, written by Isobel Nendick, gives you more detail about the week, but I would just like to add that it really was one of the best from both a musical and a social perspective.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to our two Head Choristers, Isobel Nendick and Amy Pymont – their final service was Sunday Evensong in Winchester Cathedral – a very nice way to finish!

This term, our new Head Choristers are Eleanor Adams and Samuel Freedman. Senior Team Leader is Grace Adams, and our three new Team Leaders are Matthew Crosby, Doraly Gill and Georgia Burr. Abigail Williams is now Deputy Team leader.

We welcome the following new probationers into the Choir this month – Amelie Evans, Heather Pollock and Toby Steedman, and wish them well for their time in the Choir.

On Sunday 2nd October, by invitation of Lord Salisbury, we are singing Evensong in Hatfield House Chapel, to mark the occasion of the Feast of Dedication since Henry VIII. We will be singing music by Byrd, Gibbons and Purcell, and will be accompanied by a quartet led by Andrew Watkinson. This should be a lovely experience for the Choir and something we will all be looking forward to!

Richard Harrison

CHOIR WEEK

On Monday 22nd of August we excitedly piled ourselves into vans and buses and cars, to arrive at Bedales School to begin the Winchester Choir Week of 2016. It was a short drive to the cathedral in the heart of the city and we sang our first Evensong of the week.

On Tuesday it was Men's Voices Evensong which all the trebles were lucky enough to attend after exploring the town a little further, where we discovered Arthur's legendary round table. Full Voices Evensong followed on Wednesday, whilst on Thursday we took a day off to relax and enjoy a day out at Paultons Park in the village of Ower, Hampshire.

We were fortunate enough to have almost a whole day of sun at the Park as we took some time to blow off some steam and try to rest our voices. We sang Evensong on Friday which was attended by John Rutter, and included Bob Chilcott's 'God so loved the world' anthem which has a solo that was sung beautifully by newly-appointed head chorister Eleanor Adams. We were very encouraged to see some familiar faces from the St Francis congregation in the quire and pews during Saturday Evensong, which was our penultimate day of singing. We had a busy day on Sunday, rising early to sing morning Eucharist and Evensong in the early-afternoon, after enjoying a lunch near the Cathedral put on by our brilliant team of cooks.

A huge thanks is due to everyone involved in making this choir week as smooth-running and enjoyable as it has been, including the cooks, organisers, Mr. Harrison and so many more. Unfortunately this choir week of 2016 was the last for myself and Amy Pymont, as we are now 'retiring' from the treble line which we are honoured to have been involved in, and to have had so many happy times during our 5 1/2 years here.

Isobel Nendick

(photos of the choir can be seen on the inside cover pages, in colour)

Wardens Report

Hope you've all had a great summer, and have had the chance to enjoy the lovely August sunshine after the dreary July rain! For those of you who have been away on holiday, welcome back, but, whether you've been at home or away, welcome to our latest Warden's Report!

So what's been going on over the last month or so?

Firstly, we held our third **Women's Group** meeting on the evening of July 15th, although not with the intended cast, (mainly due to sickness) or therefore, with the intended plan! However, our thanks go to our very own Fiona Burke, who stepped up (guitar in hand) to the plate at short notice, and gave us all a great evening of singing and fellowship.

Choir Week at Winchester Cathedral - this was by all accounts a great success, with several members of our congregation travelling down to support Richard and the choir. You will have read about this in Richard and Isobel's articles.

We have new seat covers and backs!

Thanks largely to the efforts of Alison Daniels and Mary Jackson, we now (as from Monday 22nd August) have some lovely new 'cobalt blue' seat covers and backs. They are beautiful, very comfortable, and a massive improvement in posterior comfort!

Maintenance update

As always, a big thanks to Stuart Richardson, who has been busy sorting out and generally organising all of the maintenance issues and tasks over the summer. We are pleased to tell you that Nick has finished the exterior painting of the Church, and the work on the gutters is now complete. A new smoke alarm has been fitted in the office, and all alarms in the Church are now linked - so if one goes off, they all go off!!

Annual Inspection

On Monday 5th September, we were visited by the Rev'd David Munchin (on behalf of the Archdeacon) for our annual inspection. Craig played 'host' and guided our visitor around the various aspects of St Francis that were due for inspection.

On Saturday 10th September, we played our part in the **Bike n'Hike 2016**. Refreshments were laid on in the Church Hall for those that braved the rainy conditions, and the dozen or so folk that stopped by were grateful for our shelter and hospitality!

Mission Action Plan

You may remember that Howell, our esteemed predecessor, used to write about any developments regarding our MAP goals, so here's an update following the last PCC meeting:

Harvest at St Francis 24th - 25th September

The Harvest weekend at St Francis was wonderful – a time of much joy, fun, and thanksgiving.

The Barn Dance on Saturday 24th with the Brookfield Band, was great fun. The team who organised it, ably assisted by a helpful band of young people, had worked so hard. The church looked amazing - pews moved aside, decorations in place, and full of checked shirts and cowboy hats. Everyone was well fed and refreshed, and happily danced the evening away (although some of us weren't entirely successful in following the caller's instructions!)

It was wonderful to have so many there, including such a large number of young children ...I felt I could have done with some jump leads as I admired their seemingly endless energy! What a great evening.

On Sunday morning all were safely gathered in for our 10am Family Communion and Parade Service ... and the church was packed! It was lovely to have so many members of our local uniformed organisations – Rainbows, Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, and to welcome so many families.

As we thought about Jesus being 'the Bread of Life' the youngsters successfully identified over a dozen varieties of bread and their countries of origin, and Communion was celebrated using bread cooked in church.

As we considered the ingredients of bread, we thought about how we as Christians can be like yeast – in the powerful growth of the Kingdom of God from small beginnings, being active, spreading and growing. As God's love and grace, growing in our hearts, changes us from within - so we can act as agents of change in our culture and society - slowly transforming from within to make a difference in our lives, and those around us, in our community, and beyond.

We are to be as yeast – as we say 'a Yes to God'

To increase our engagement with our uniformed organisations - we are pleased to have invited our uniformed organisations to the Harvest Festival.

To set up a structure to nurture and inspire our youth - this is being reviewed by our Youth Committee.

To offer more stand-alone prayer and study opportunities as well as nurturing our current groups - this will be overseen by the Ministry team who will be running a new Confirmation course, leading up to a Service presided over by The Right Rev'd Dr Alan Smith in February 2017.

To develop a communications strategy for both internal and external communications - part of the Comms team's work is focused on developing new external noticeboards to help publicise events and other activities in a more 'stand-out' way, as well as designing a new 'Welcome to St Francis' folder that can be handed out to all newcomers. This folder will have specific inserts that will provide details on many aspects of life at St Francis.

To encourage people to participate fully in the life of the church. As you might expect, the PCC felt that this last goal should be everyone's responsibility!

Diary dates!

Make sure you don't miss out, please put these dates in your diary!

Friday 7th October at 8.00pm: **Women's Group** - Wine & Spine (book-themed evening).

Saturday 15th October at 7.30 pm: **Fiddlers Two** - Andrew Watkinson and Sara Trickey.

Bye for now!

Clare, Craig and the Warden team

Welwyn Garden Concert Club

You may already have gathered from the leaflets displayed in the church that the Welwyn Garden Concert Club is moving from Campus West to St Francis Church from this autumn. For those of you who haven't encountered the club, it has been organising first-class chamber music recitals in Welwyn Garden City for over seventy years. It was founded in 1944 by a famous local piano teacher Dorothy Hess who had a talent of finding talented young musicians whom she used to bring here to perform. Many of the people who have performed at the club over the years have become very well-known names.

We still organise six concerts a year of amazing professional chamber musicians, and we are very much looking forward to our move to St Francis and the opportunities it offers. After the less-than-perfect acoustics at Campus West we are going to enjoy the beautiful sound of the music in the church, and we will also appreciate having a lovely grand piano on site. Many of you already know our President – Andrew Watkinson, who will be performing for us in our first season with the Galini Trio.

Our programme for the forthcoming year is:

8th October **The Vanbrugh Quartet** playing Mozart, Shostakovich and Beethoven. They are the leading string quartet in Ireland with posts at the University in Cork, and at RTE in Berlin.

12th November **Atea Wind Quintet**. This young ensemble is playing a very diverse programme with a mixture of familiar and less well-known music.

14th January **Julian Trevelyan** will give a piano recital. Julian is seventeen and lives in St. Albans. He has twice reached the piano final of the BBC Young Musician Competition and has won several prestigious competitions in France. He will play a programme of Schubert and Debussy.

18th February **The Castalian String Quartet** (first prize winners of the 2015 Lyon International Chamber Music Competition) are becoming very popular in the UK. They will perform Schubert, Haydn, Ades and Beethoven for us.

25th March **The Galini Trio** comprising Andrew Watkinson, Shuna Wilson and Caroline Palmer will perform Beethoven and Schubert.

6th May The final concert of the season will be a violin and piano recital with Savitri Grier and Richard Uttley. Richard has played a solo piano recital previously for the club and went down very well indeed.

Do join us! Come and listen to international artists without having to travel down to London! The best way is to buy a season ticket for all six concerts for £70 – come to all the performances and try something you might not otherwise have encountered! It's a great way of discovering new artists and fresh repertoire. Single tickets are also available on the door (£15) or from our website:
<http://www.wgconcertclub.org.uk>.

We encourage young people to sample the music on offer and their tickets are only £5 per concert. Please help spread the word about the concerts, it's the most effective way of publicising what we do. We will also be on the lookout for volunteers to help moving furniture, selling tickets and generally helping to make the concerts run smoothly, so if you feel you could help us we'd be delighted to hear from you. We looking forward to meeting many of you at the concerts during the year.

Helen Shabetai

Rev'd Josh's ingredient of the month

BEETROOT

As with game, for a long time I thought I didn't like beetroot. Turned out I had only ever tried that sharp, vinegary pickled beetroot that comes in jars. Discovering raw beetroot was a revelation to me! And this is still one of my favourite ways to eat it – raw; grated or finely chopped in salads. Try roasting it in a little maple syrup to serve with duck, or gently braising with thyme and serving alongside seared mackerel, with pickled shallots and a horseradish cream. Borscht, a chilled beetroot soup from Russia, is well worth trying if you haven't before. And roasted beetroot is the perfect accompaniment to all sorts of game dishes – great with pheasant, grouse, partridge, venison...give it a go!

'Cooking Curate's' Recipes

Lots of people don't like game, but I think that is sometimes the case because the gamey flavour is overpowering when the meat is eaten simply roasted with gravy. Here are a couple of ideas to celebrate the game season by doing something a little different – see if I can convince you!

Spiced quail salad

Serves 4 as a starter

Ingredients:

2 quails, spatchcocked (backbone cut out and pushed flat – you can ask your butcher to do this)

1 red chilli, chopped	2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp crushed coriander seeds	1 tsp crushed fennel seeds
1 tsp salt	2 tsp caster sugar
20ml rice wine vinegar	

2 Little Gem lettuce	2 spring onions, finely chopped
Half a red onion, finely sliced	1 small bunch fresh mint, chopped
1 small bunch fresh coriander, chopped	Juice of 1 lime
2 tbsp kacip manis (available in Sainsbury's, amongst other shops I'm sure)	
1 tsp honey	Half a tsp Chinese 5-spice

Method:

Mix together the chilli, garlic, coriander seeds, fennel seeds, salt, sugar and rice vinegar. Marinade the quail in this overnight.

When ready to cook, preheat the oven to 190°C. Remove the quail from the marinade, and cut in half lengthways, so there are 4 pieces each with one breast and one leg. Push a skewer through each piece so that they stay flat while cooking.

In a hot pan, heat a little oil and fry the quails, skin side down, for around 4 minutes, until the skin is brown and starting to get crispy. Transfer to the oven for about 8 minutes (make sure it is cooked through).

For the salad, mix together the lettuce leaves with the spring onions, red onion, mint and coriander (I also add some fresh chilli to the salad if I fancy a bit more of a kick).

Mix the kacip manis, lime juice, honey and 5-spice into a salad dressing.

Place a quarter of the salad on each plate, spoon over the dressing and top with a piece of the quail.

Roast pheasant with gnocchi and ragu of wild mushrooms

Serves 4 as a main

Ingredients:

4 pheasant breasts, skin removed	8 rashers of streaky bacon
25g butter	1 onion, finely diced
1 carrot, peeled and finely diced	2 sticks celery, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed	Large splash of Madeira
200g wild mushrooms, cleaned and roughly chopped	
300ml chicken stock	50ml double cream

For the gnocchi:

1kg potatoes	100g plain flour
25g butter, melted	
1 tbsp fresh chives, finely chopped	1 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped
1 tbsp fresh tarragon, finely chopped	
50g parmesan, grated	1 large egg

Method:

Season each pheasant breast with a little black pepper, and wrap in two rashers of the bacon. Leave in a fridge until ready to cook.

For the mushroom ragu, gently fry the onion, carrot and celery in butter until soft. Then add the garlic, mushrooms and a little more butter if it's looking dry.

When the mushrooms are soft and glossy, add the Madeira and bring to a simmer. Then add the chicken stock, bring back to the boil and simmer until the stock has reduced by half.

Just before serving, add the cream and check seasoning.

For the gnocchi, peel and chop the potatoes, and boil in lightly salted water until just soft (20 mins or so). Remove from the pan and leave to cool.

When cool, mash the potatoes or pass through a ricer until completely smooth.

Mix in the flour, melted butter, herbs, parmesan, egg, and a little salt and pepper. This should form a light, sticky dough (you may need to add a little more flour).

On a lightly floured surface, cut the dough into quarters and roll each quarter into a thin cylinder. Then cut each cylinder into 2cm pieces.

(For traditional-looking Italian gnocchi, then roll each piece into a ball and roll against the back of a fork, so the ridges leave an imprint. This also helps the gnocchi absorb more sauce).

Cook the gnocchi in boiling salted water – at first the gnocchi will sink to the bottom.

When it starts to float, that's when you know it's ready. Cook in batches – doing all of the gnocchi at the same time will make it stick and will cool the water too much. When the gnocchi is cooked, transfer to the warm ragu sauce (make sure the pheasant is ready by now, as you don't want the gnocchi sitting in the sauce for too long before serving).

Cooking the pheasant – preheat the oven to 200°C. In a hot frying pan, cook the pheasant in a little oil for 5 mins on each side. Then transfer to the oven for 10 minutes. Leave to rest before serving.

Serve the pheasant with the gnocchi and mushrooms, and some lovely dark green veg such as Savoy cabbage or kale.



Apple cake with cinnamon and pistachio

Ingredients:

100g raisins or sultanas	Small amount dark rum
1kg dessert apples, peeled and roughly chopped	
100g brown sugar	70g unsalted pistachios, chopped
1 tsp ground cinnamon	1 tsp ground allspice
200g unsalted butter	200g caster sugar
3 large eggs	200g ground almonds
20g flaked almonds	

Method:

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Soak the raisins in dark rum for half an hour.

Place the apples in a pan over a medium heat with the brown sugar and cook until they are soft. Then add the drained raisins, 50g of the pistachios, cinnamon and allspice. Leave to cool.

Whisk together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in one egg, then a third of the ground almonds. Repeat twice more. You should be left with a smooth batter.

Place the apple mix in the bottom of a tin or baking dish, then add the batter on top. Cook in the oven for 30 minutes. Then sprinkle over the remaining pistachios and flaked almonds, and cook for a further 10 mins.

Serve warm with cream or ice cream.

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Scouts, Cubs & Beavers	Carl Davidson Carl.davidson@1st-wgc-scouts.org.uk	07907703387
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Parish Coffee	Mrs Susan Welton	323894
Church Flowers	Mrs Diane Hemmings	335645
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Children's Society	Mrs Kate McQuillen knafzger@hotmail.com	371215
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Toddle Time Play Group	Contact the Parish Office	694191
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