signpost

September 2024

£1

st francis bramley
friendship love truth

At your service

To arrange the publishing of Banns of Marriage, Wedding or Baptism services at St Francis' church, call into church on 1st Saturday of each month between 10:00am and 12 noon or Tel: 702576.

Email:bramley.stfrancis@gmail.com

Enquiries for funerals can also be made on the above telephone number and e-mail address

Cuppachat is on the 1st Saturday of each month, between 10:00 am - 12 noon. The next will be on **7th September**.

Mothers' Union is the 2nd Monday **of** each month. Meetings are usually in church, usually starting at 1:30pm. The next meeting will be on **9th September**. All welcome. .

Bramley Friendship Group meets on 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month between 2:00pm - 3:30pm in the church hall. The next meeting will be on **5th September**.

All are welcome to come along to any of the above.

If you have any pictures or articles for the magazine, please send them to: magazinestfrancis@gmail.com. Deadline: 15th of the month: Irene Magill, Editor

Church/hall bookings - please contact church office: 01709 702576 or visit our website.

Priest in Charge: Rev Helen Terry email address -

helenterry_uk@yahoo.co.uk

- Church website: www.stfrancisbramley.org
- Churchwardens: James Moore and John Greaves

This month .....

What will you find in the pages of this issue of Signpost?

Reflections from Rev Helen: Lights for Christ

Towards the Light

Noise Drowning the Noticing

Thoughts of a Church Member: Our Daily Bread

What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?

Afternoon Tea at Epworth Rectory

Jan's Busy Summer

and much more

Cover Story

On Monday 29th July members of St Francis' church and and friends visited Karen Wilson at the Rectory in Epworth for Afternoon Tea. Karen hosts these events in aid of the local hospice.

You can read all about our visit and see more photos on pages 14 and 15 of this issue of **Signpost.**

Thinking as Christians

It is religion without love that has been responsible for most of the misery of the world. - ***Anon***

How many Christians live their lives packed up and ready to go? - ***J I Packer***

Whom God calls He qualifies. - ***Richard Sibbes***

Reflections from Rev Helen:

Lights for Christ

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.
Philippians 2: 13-14

In my role I get the privilege of being part of Baptism services quite regularly, and it never gets boring. One of my favourite parts of the Baptism service is after I say to the newly baptised individual '**You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life**' and the congregation join in with the following words: '**Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father**'. What a wonderful commission!

Over the next month or so we are going to be thinking about being Lights for Christ in our Sunday services, focusing on Receiving the Light, Walking in the Light and Reflecting the Light (Shining), because that is what we are called to do as Christians. As baptised believers, we are commissioned at the start of our walk through life with Jesus, to shine - this is the role of a disciple.

Now you may be thinking that there are some (or many) days when you don't feel particularly shiny, well the good news is that it is not our own light we are shining, rather it is the gift of light that Jesus gives us, the light of life, the gift of salvation. When we walk in this light, looking to Jesus to inspire us, guide us and meet our needs, then we will shine in the world.

The world is full of darkness, there is so much bad news and selfishness, that is why Paul reminds us that we are to be different, because we are children of God we are not to blend in or hide in the darkness, but shine like stars in the sky. This is not to draw attention to ourselves, because no matter how amazing God has made us to be, no matter how many gifts and abilities, it is in those times and places when we rely on God most that we shine the brightest!

So over the next month or so, perhaps you might like to take a bit of time to reflect on your own Baptism (whether you remember it or not) and think about how you can shine to the glory of God wherever you find yourself, whatever you find yourself doing.

I pray that God blesses you as you seek Him and blesses many through you as you follow in Christ's example, as you shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Rev Helen

Prayer for September 2024

Lord, here we are in September – a beautiful month at the end of the summer, but before the autumn has taken hold. A month of excitement and new starts for many, a month when courage is needed for our children and young people.

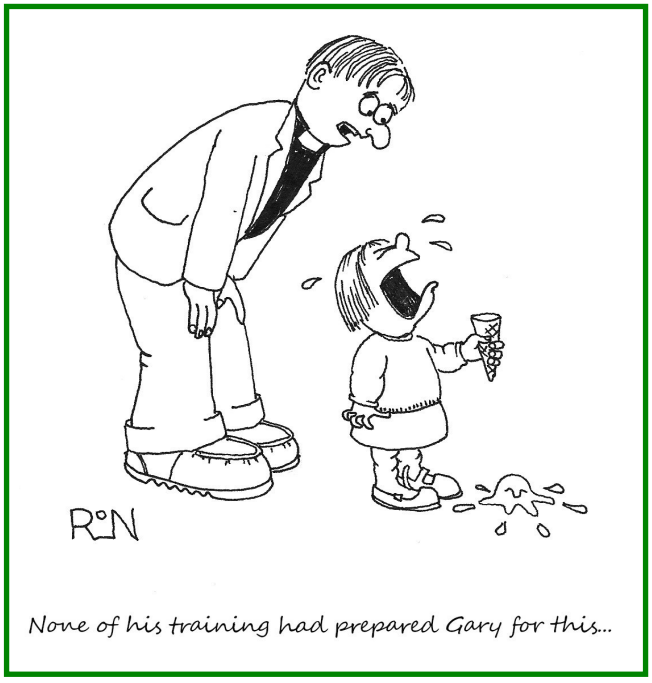
And Lord we pray for courage, compassion and integrity for our new Prime Minister and our new government. We pray for justice and peace in our country and in the world.

Help us Lord, to know that you are Lord of September; you are Lord and giver of every new month, every new day, every new minute. Help us to put our trust in you for our adventures and for our mundane everyday routines.

You are our generous, loving Father and promise that you will never leave us or forsake us when we trust in you, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



"How thoughtful, wearing something all the wedding guests could shelter under in case of rain."

Towards the Light

I find that my bookcases are roads to adventures. I reached for a book titled **'Towards the Light'** – a journey through the Old Testament by **William Clarke** and first published in 1985. As I read the list of contents I pondered which chapter to read first – 'In the Beginning', 'To the Promised Land', 'Woman in Charge !' or 'Bridge between old and new'. I settled for 'Songs of Israel', the book of Psalms in the centre of the bible. When you think about it, it is an amazing thing that after thousands of years we still use the Psalms for our own spiritual welfare and prayer life.

Psalm 121 beautifully expresses the confidence we can have in God as our Protector. A God who can meet our needs and receive the worship of our hearts and our prayers. As we read the Psalms, we notice that God is always at the centre. It is God who will hear our cry of need, our fears and despairs, and be our light in our darkest times. How great is the Lord is the theme of the Psalms from beginning to end.

Have you got a favourite Psalm? The most well known is **Psalm 23** which says, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want' and 'surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life!' **Psalm 8** says 'When I look at the heavens...what is man thou art mindful of him?' In **Psalm 19** we find the words 'The heavens are telling the glory of God.' **Psalm 147** tells us of God's power to heal the broken hearted and **Psalm 122** says 'I was glad when THEY [who are THEY? I wonder] said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'

This may be a message to our own hearts to invite someone to our church 'The House of the Lord'. There are 150 Psalms in the centre of the bible so you may choose more than one Psalm as your favourite and then keep reading secure in the knowledge that God will be a helper and a saviour, reaching down to our deepest needs and receiving our joyous praises just as the writers of the Psalms, the men of faith in ancient times did.

Joy

Visit

A bishop visited a primary school in his full episcopal attire - with his mitre, robes and bishop's crook or crozier. A little lad's mother asked him later what he had thought of the bishop's visit to his school. The little boy replied: "It was great - now I know what a *real* crook looks like!"

Not all

Dear Minister: I know that God loves everyone, but He has never met my sister.

Love Peter (aged 7).

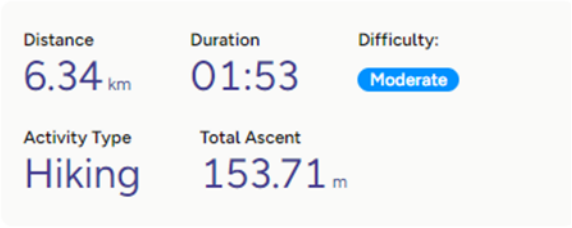
Flowers for the glory of God

If you would like to commemorate a special family occasion; please consider a donation to the Flower Fund for an arrangement to be placed in church on the Sunday nearest to your special occasion.

It may be that you would like to sponsor one of the arrangements in memory of a loved one's birthday or anniversary and we can, if you wish, include a special note with the flowers showing to whom they are dedicated. For further details please contact Christina Higton, Dorothy Barnett, or Joyce Taylor, our Flower Team.

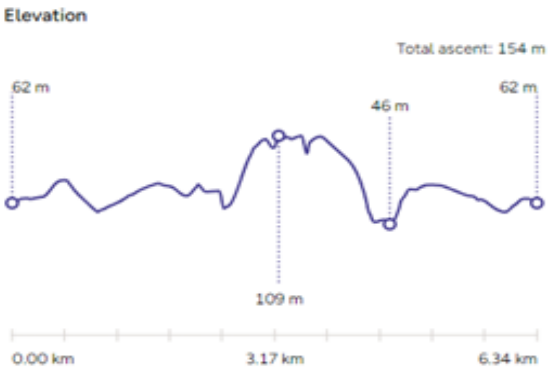
The flower arrangements in the photos were on display in church and the church porch on 7th August and were sponsored by George .and Gill Fisher to commemorate Ivy's birthday.

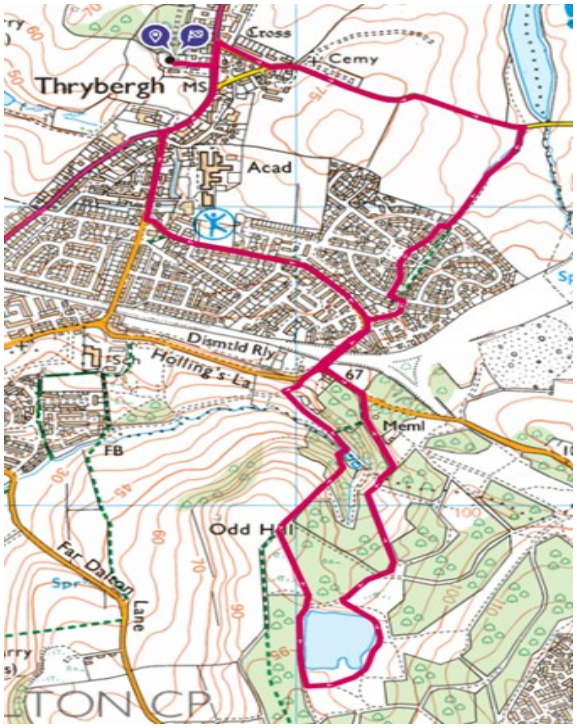
Noise Drowning the Noticing



Starting at St Leonard's church this walk sets off towards the reservoir but turns left at the back entrance, heading towards March Flats Road. Passing through a residential part of Thrybergh, you enter Silverwood and walk up the hill to the lake at the top. After looping the lake the route back is slightly different, passing back under the railway bridge and along Vale Road on the way back to St Leonard's.

It is mostly a gentle walk but there are a few steep slopes up and down, with some rough terrain underfoot at times





I spent the first half of the walk listening to a book that I was struggle to really engage with, so my mind was wandering but I wasn't really enjoying the surroundings. Eventually I got a bit fed up of the book and decided to take a break, removing my headphones. Immediately I was struck by the noise of the birds and saw a jay fly across the path in front of me. My daughter and I are always on the look out for jays but they are shy and we don't spot them often (she likes that they are pink).

I was struck with how the noise of life often drowns out the beauty. I went for a walk for some exercise, but ended up cutting out the noise and seeing the beauty of creation.

When I went over the brow of a hill I was confronted with the contrast of the bright flowers, and the steel works. In a way there is beauty in both, but it is different. I am not sure I would have really noticed if I hadn't taken the chance to remove the noise and be present to what was around me.

I wonder, what noise is there in your life that is taking away from noticing the beauty around you? What is so loud you struggle to be present to the good that is right in front of you?

Rev James

Songs for a Summer's Evening

On Saturday 20th June **Friends in Harmony Community Choir** presented a concert with a varied programme of songs from their extensive repertoire. The concert was in aid of **Sunnyside Supplies** and hosted by St Francis church. The concert raised the magnificent sum of £818.68 which has been received by Sunnyside Supplies with grateful thanks.

The songs included music from well known musicals and a medley **of Neil Diamond** songs, including the ever popular ***'Sweet Caroline'***, which the audience joined in with gusto.

Thank you to Friends in Harmony, under the direction of **Graham Cowley** and accompanied by **Catherine Serjeant,** for this enjoyable concert. Also thank you to the Hospitality Team of St Francis' church for serving refreshments and to **Rev Helen Terry** and the PCC for agreeing to the church hosting the concert.

Thank you to **John Greaves** for the photos of the choir and audience enjoying singing ***Sweet Caroline***

Footprints

Toddler group

Every Thursday (Term-time)

9:30-11am

St Francis Church, Main Street, Bramley

Tel: 01709 702576 or email: bramley.stfrancis@gmail.com

Thoughts from a Church Member:
Our Daily Bread

When you sit down to have a meal have you ever thought about where all the food came from? The easiest answer to that, of course, will be the local supermarket and for many people that's the beginning and end of the food chain. Meat comes hygienically wrapped, vegetables and fruit are fresh and there are cans and bottles of just about everything you might desire. Every time we sit down for a meal do we take a moment to be thankful. From places far away the food may have been harvested by people often earning very little money. Our food may have been transported by ship and lorry. It will have been processed somewhere in Britain and put on the shelves by people like you and me working in our local supermarkets. If any of those chains were to be broken by drought or war or strikes or economic collapse then, of course, the food wouldn't be there on our plate at all.

The World Bank has said key grains such as corn, wheat and soybean have seen the most dramatic increases ever which they describe as "historic". We may think food prices where we live are going up too much but what about the poorest countries? In many ways buying our food from the supermarkets has made us forget how fickle the weather can be. Failed harvests are happening somewhere in the world all the time.

Give us today our daily bread', we pray, but we pray that God will give all people their daily bread. Next time you look at the food on your plate thank those who cooked it, but remember too where the food came from - who planted it, who reared it, who harvested it and who brought it to market. When we do this we realise how complicated the issue of food production has become. The food on our plate has overcome the unexpected changes of the weather, the politics of the market and the shortage of fuel and oil to find its way on to our tables -and for that we should be thankful.

Did you know, that the feeding of the 5,000 is the only story, apart from the Crucifixion, to be found in all four Gospels? There is something about food, about being fed, about eating with one another, that is deeply spiritual. In some of our services we will gather at the Lord's Table to eat the bread and drink the wine of his new life. He invites us. We are his guests. Jesus will feed us, and renew us, and bless us through that simple act of eating and drinking.

And Finally: I am reminded of the story of the elderly couple who died. They were received by St Peter through the Pearly Gates into heaven. After a while they found it an absolutely wonderful place. Then the husband said to his wife, *'If you hadn't come up with all those healthy foods we could have been here years ago.'*

Alan Taylor

What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?

The WWJD notion has a long history: a notable example is Thomas à Kempis' *The Imitation of Christ* - and that was 600 years ago. Today, however, there is some suspicion that the use of the WWJD bracelets, and related objects, is largely to identify the wearer as belonging to the Christian subculture, rather than as an aid to making moral decisions.

Criticism of WWJD may, however, be perceived as hurtful by some Christians, so let us consider it in more detail.

On the positive side, the WWJD slogan makes people think about Jesus - and not just when they are at church. It can be a helpful reminder to consider 'What would Jesus do?' in a particular situation you find yourself in. It also encourages people to do good and if it promotes a Jesus - like attitude then this is thoroughly biblical. In **Philippians 2:5** Paul says that our 'attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus' (*NIV*). Paul is encouraging an outlook of humility, gentleness, forgiveness, truth, compassion and love.

However, WWJD has shortcomings as a guide to the Christian life. Christianity has never worked when reduced to a slogan, let alone an acronym of just four letters. Christianity is not about a set of rules or a moral philosophy, it is about an encounter with the living Jesus Christ. WWJD focuses on moral questions, while New Testament teaching centres on being a new creation in Christ, being adopted into God's family and having the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. The fullness of a transformed, spirit-filled life cannot be captured in a slogan!

WWJD also downplays Jesus Himself, focusing on Him as a great moral teacher. He is not only a moral teacher, He is the living Lord, God on earth, who died and rose again to save humanity. If Jesus were only a prophet or a moral teacher then WWJD would be the key to Christianity. Yet He *is* much more, so focusing on WWJD means we can lose some really important elements of a biblical Christianity. A basic reading of the Gospels indicates that Jesus is a man with a mission: to go to Jerusalem, be rejected and betrayed by his own people and then die on the cross. So although human, just as we are, He is very different: He is also divine and on a divine mission. He gave up normal life and family relationships to fulfil His calling to live and die for God's people.

It is *not* clear how Jesus would react if He was put in our place. Although he challenged many of the abuses of the Old Testament law (particularly concerning the Sabbath and moral legalism), He seems to have been a faithful first-century Palestinian Jew.

As such, He would have attended synagogue, memorised large portions of the Hebrew Bible, dressed conservatively, shunned pork and presumably prayed at regular intervals during the day. Little of this applies to modern Christians, so are we being inconsistent in not doing as Jesus would have done? Jesus threw moneychangers out of the temple **(Matthew 21:12-13)** but this is *not* a model for a universal condemnation of capitalism. It was a rebuke to the Jewish leadership of the time that what should have been the holy place - somewhere the Gentile nations came to meet with God -had been turned into a corrupt marketplace. WWJD oversimplifies the difficult area of ethics and morality and downplays other things that Christians have traditionally invoked to help them make decisions: conscience; the Old Testament Law, summarised in the Ten Commandments; the letters of the early church, which say much about the practicalities of morality; the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and the support and wisdom of the wider church, including Christian friends. The best summary of Jesus' moral teachings are the beatitudes, which emphasize a heart change. This heart change can only occur with a daily encounter with the risen Lord through the Spirit.

What would Jesus do? Often, we simply *cannot* know. What we *can* be sure of is Jesus' attitude. He exemplified humility and obedience **(Philippians 2:5-8).** So what about WWJD? Well, it is better than nothing. But Christianity cannot be reduced to a slogan - we need a living relationship with Christ and to know the power of the Holy Spirit. We also need the wisdom that comes through study of Scripture. It is great to see Jesus' name elevated and it is good that the phrase is gaining popularity in the wider world, but as Christians we need to reclaim it and use it as a springboard to a deeper and more thoughtful consideration of what a Christian life should be and how we can seek to follow in the footsteps of the Son of God.

J. John
Reverend Canon

Submitted by Rita Morse

Presence

Expecting Him, my door was open wide:
Then I looked round
If any lack of service might be found,
And saw Him at my side:
How entered, by what secret stair,
I know not, knowing only He was there. ***TE Brown (1830 -97)***

Afternoon Tea at Epworth Rectory

On Monday 29th **July Karen Wilson** gave a very warm welcome to members of our church and their friends as she hosted us for Afternoon Tea. It was a very warm afternoon so we were able to enjoy our tea in the garden, shaded from the sun in the gazebos Karen had erected. For some of us it was our second visit this summer as we had already enjoyed a visit to Karen's home with members of St Francis' Mothers' Union.

We enjoyed dainty sandwiches, trifle, sausage rolls and a variety of cakes, all beautifully prepared and served by Karen. Proceeds for the Afternoon teas were in aid of the local hospice that Karen works so hard in fundraising for.

Thank you to Karen and her husband Rev Paul Wilson for their generous hospitality and welcome, especially Karen for all her hard work. Also thank you to Rev Judy Leverton who organise this with Karen and to the drivers who made sure we got there and back safely.

Thank you to **John Greaves** who took the photos on this page and the following page.

Another group photo, this time taken by **Rev Paul Wilson.** All others taken by JohnGreaves

Harvest of Thoughts

"Dig a hole in your garden of thoughts. Into it put all your disillusions, disappointments, regrets, worries, troubles, doubts and fears and–forget. - Cover well with the earth of fruitfulness, water it from the well of contentment. Sow on top again the seeds of hope, courage, strength, patience and love. Then, when the time of gathering comes, may your harvest be a rich and plentiful one." ***Anon***

Submitted by **Alan Taylor**

It has been a busy few weeks for members of the Mothers' Union. We enjoyed two events which raised funds for the Mothers' Union charity **AFIA** (Away from it All) which provides holidays for families who have not been able to afford a holiday for several years and meets the AFIA criteria. We also were able to send a donation to Mothers' Union for **IMPC** (Indoor Members' Prayer Circle) which provides support for indoor members of Mothers' Union who cannot attend meetings due to personal circumstances.

The Strawberry Cream Tea and Silent Auction on 8th July 2024 was very well supported, including members of St Francis church who were able to come along. It was a very enjoyable afternoon and a total of £351.77 was raised.

On 6th August one of our members, **Angela Parker**, who is also the Diocesan representative for AFIA, hosted an afternoon tea for members of St Francis' Mothers' Union members. The weather was warm and sunny and we were able to enjoy our tea of sandwiches, assorted cakes and savouries in Angela's garden. This event raised £171.35.

We were able to send £471.35 to AFIA and £50 to IMPC.

Thank you to everyone who supported these two events and to all who worked so hard behind the scenes baking scones and hulling strawberries for the Strawberry Cream Tea and to Angela Parker for undertaking the catering and hosting the Afternoon Tea at her home.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 9th September when our meetings will be back in church, starting at 1:30pm. Our guest speaker will be **Rev James Gould** who will be talking about his journey of faith. Everyone is very welcome to come along and join us.

Irene Magill

Time to Smile

Permission

Extract from an official letter notifying residents of a new boundary road: "It is hoped to take the new by-pass through the old cemetery, provided we can get permission from the various bodies concerned."

Egg

What did the egg in the monastery say?

"Out of the frying pan and into the friar."

Jan's Busy Summer

Many members of St Francis' church family will remember **Jan Watson** who moved to the south coast several years ago. Jan has been busy this summer and has shared photos of her recent doings.

The top two photos are of a fund raising event for a charity, Family Support West Sussex, which Jan supports. The bottom two photos are of Jan's recent holiday on the Isle of Wight, where she visited Osborne House, which was Queen Victoria's holiday home.

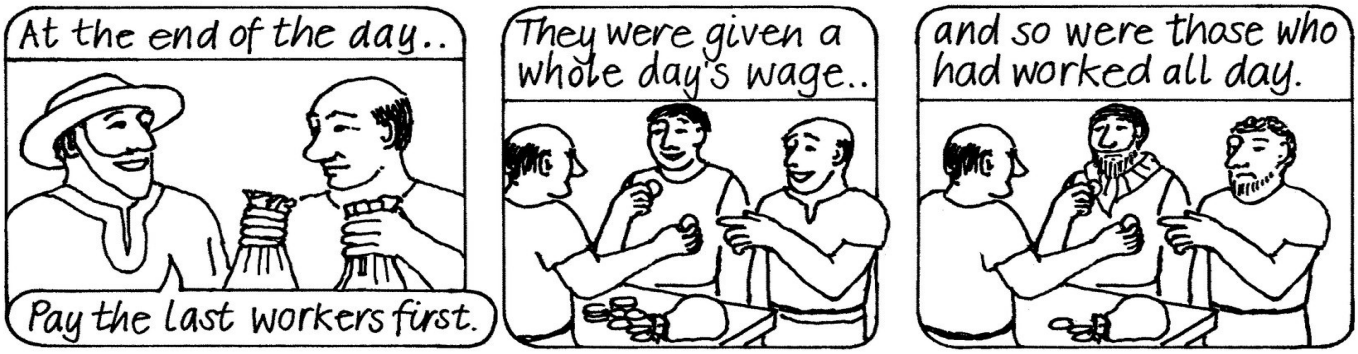
Children's Corner

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Matthew chapter 20 verses 1-15

Jesus told a story to describe God's kingdom. A vineyard owner went to the marketplace at dawn to hire workers to pick his grapes.



Children's Corner

Important Dates for your Diary

Thursday 5th September: Footprints is re-starting in church hall for pre-school children and their parents and carers. Every Thursday from 9:30 to 11:00am.

Thursday 5th September*: Bramley Friendship Group in the church hall between 2:00 - 3:30pm. The group meets on the first and third Thursdays each month each month.

Saturday 7th September:* Cuppachat in church between 10:00am - 12 noon.

Monday 9th September:* Mothers' Union meeting in church from 1:30pm.

Thursday 18th September:* Bramley Friendship Group in the church hall between 2:00 - 3:30pm.

Everyone is very welcome to come to the above events marked *. Why not come along and see if you would enjoy the opportunities of fun and fellowship, if you haven't been

Contact Details for St Francis' Church

www.stfrancisbramley.org

Email: bramley.stfrancis@gmail.com

Church Office: Tel 01709 702576

Rev Helen Terry -helenterry_uk@yahoo.co.uk

St Francis Church Bramley

The hall at St Francis' Church can be hired for special events, meetings etc.
Hire is **£17.50** an hour for non-church members.

Advert space in *Signpost* magazine is only **£50** a year for ¼ page of A5

Contact the Parish Phone: 01709 702576 or email: bramley.stfrancis@gmail.com

Hole for one

A golfing priest, after having been beaten by an elderly parishioner, returned to the club-house somewhat depressed. "Cheer up," said the layman. Remember, you'll eventually be burying me some day." "Yes," said the priest. "But even then, it will be your hole!"

Here at St Francis Church

WEDNESDAYS at 9.00 am or 5.00 pm
Contact Michelle on 07867 304453

SATURDAYS at 7.30 am, 9.00 am or 10.30 am
Contact Joanne Millward on 0114 2462499

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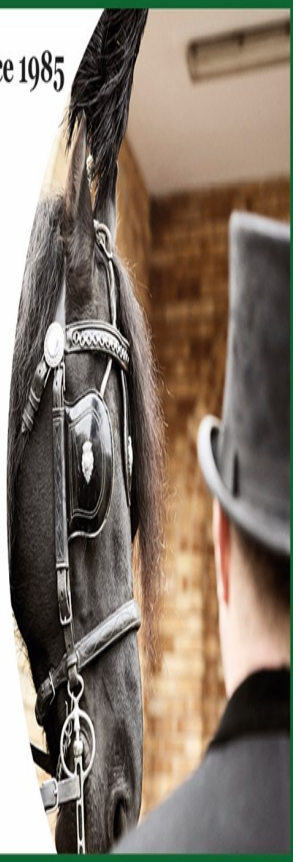

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Worship Celebrations during September

All Sunday Morning Services are at 10:00am

Sunday 1st Holy Communion

Family Fun Service at 4:00pm

Sunday 8th Morning Worship

Sunday 15th Morning Worship

Sunday 22nd Holy Communion

Sunday 29th Joint Service with St. Leonard's at St Francis' church

Everyone is very welcome at all our services. A designated play area for children and parents has been set aside in the church.

Refreshments are served in the church hall at the end of the Sunday morning service.

Contact Details for St Francis' Church

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Church Office: Tel 01709 702576

Rev Helen Terry -helenterry_uk@yahoo.co.uk

St Francis Church Bramley