

Please feel free to take this booklet home with you



**THE PARISH OF  
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
BARKINGSIDE**

A parish church in the Catholic tradition of the Church of England, part of Redbridge Deanery in the Barking Episcopal Area of the Diocese of Chelmsford.

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR A  
14 December 2025**

*“Drop down, ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness”*  
Advent Prose

*A warm welcome to all newcomers and visitors to St. Francis Church  
Please do join us for refreshments after the 10.15am Mass*

**TODAY’S SERVICES**

8.00am      Mass

10.15am      Parish Mass

Today we welcome the Revd Simon Elman to preside  
and preach at the Parish Mass.

**Collect of the Day**

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah (35: 1 - 10)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Magnificat  
(Luke 1:46b – 55)

**R. My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; he has looked with favour on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed; the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name. **R.**

He has mercy on those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has shown the strength of his arm and has scattered the proud in their conceit. **R.**

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent away empty. **R.**

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise made to our forebears; to Abraham and his children for ever. **R.**

A reading from the letter of St. James (5: 7 – 10)

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.

You also must be patient.

Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

Belovèd, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew  
(11: 2 - 11)

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’

Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes?

Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces.

What then did you go out to see? A prophet?

Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.”

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Post Communion Collect

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;  
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ  
comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is  
alive and reigns now and for ever. **Amen**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: -**

*...the sick and suffering and those who care for them, those who are alone, isolated and vulnerable, and especially for:* Connie Barnes, Debrah Barney, Bernadette, Ann Cheetham, Cornelio Denhere, Helen Forbes, Brian Good, Gillian, Judy Harvey, Trinny, Liz Leatherbarrow, Ivar Kalnins, Sharon Knight, Dan Reed, Mary Roper, Graham Sandy, Sofia Savvas, Adrian Shelton, Pauline Sheridan, Philip Sims, Christine Street, Norman Street, Anita Watts, Heather Wheeler, Mary Vadsala, Simon Pettit, Eamonn Moloney, Vicky Berrill.

**PLEASE ADVISE NICHOLAS OF ANY ALTERATIONS.**

*....the recently departed:*

*....those whose anniversaries of death occur this week, including:*

14th Eric Bainbridge

15th Alice Starling, James Marshall, George Beer

16th Florence Hill, Bertha Page

17th Marie Pearson, Althea Greenaway

18th Lilian Browning, Gladys Bartlett, Helen Brown

19th Laurinia Hardy, Sidney Hutchinson

*....all those living or working in:* Greenwood Gardens,  
Hanover Gardens

**COPY OF READINGS** for 4 January (Lindsay) is now available. Please collect from the back of church.

**200 CLUB** is due to be drawn today for three prizes. This will be the last draw this year.

**A REMINDER** that the **ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE** with FAIRLOP BRASS is tomorrow Monday 15 December at 7.30pm, followed by refreshments.

Please make this service well known, and encourage your friends and neighbours to join us.

**PRAYER LIST** The list of those for whom prayers have been asked is being reviewed. Please see the list on the table at the back of church to see if any amendment is needed and place a cross in the appropriate column (retain, remove, add new name). The list will be removed after today's Parish Mass, however, should there be any other additions subsequently, please do not hesitate to inform Nicholas *and* David.

### **SEASONAL MEAL**

For some years we marked the New Year with a restaurant lunch - remember Fiskardos?

A meal is being planned for Sunday 11 January 2026 in our church hall, prepared by Anna and Gary Fenton, at a price to be advised, meanwhile, to help with the planning, please sign up on the sheet at the back of church as soon as possible.

Further information from Wendy or Anna.

### **NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER PCC MEETING**

To make travelling easier on Thursday mornings, it was agreed that the timing be changed to 10.00a.m. This move met with the approval of the congregation at the service on 4 December, and will take effect from 5 February.

While a Mass on the first Thursday of January (New Year's Day) was ruled out, it was thought that a form of service to welcome the New Year at 12 noon that day, with some suitable refreshment afterward could be arranged. Further details to follow, meanwhile comments to Nicholas, please.

## **OTHER SERVICES THIS WEEK**

### **Sun 21st      THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8.00am    Mass  
10.15am    Parish Mass

## **SOME FUTURE DATES AT ST. FRANCIS**

### **15 December      PARISH CAROL SERVICE**

7.30pm      with Fairlop Brass  
See also separate handbill

### **21 December      FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8.00am      Mass  
10.15am      Parish Mass

### **25 December      CHRISTMASS DAY**

10.15am      Solemn Mass with Procession and  
Blessing of the Crib

### **28 December      THE HOLY INNOCENTS**

8.00am      Mass†

### **4 January      FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY**

8.00am      Mass  
10.15am      Parish Mass

†We regret that this will be the only mass on 28 December as it has not been possible to find a priest for the 1015 service. Our parish is not alone in this position; several others are similarly affected.

## **PARISH CONTACTS**

**Vicar** (position vacant)

**Churchwarden**

Mr. Nicholas Hurst

07885 910 943

[hew.military@gmail.com](mailto:hew.military@gmail.com)

**Parish Safeguarding Officer**

Mrs. Katie Mensah

07475 509907

[safeguarding@stfrancisbarkingside.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stfrancisbarkingside.org.uk)

## **PARISH OFFICE**

Weddings, Baptisms, Confirmations  
and Confessions

Please contact Mr Nicholas Hurst as above