

NEWSLETTER

17th April 2025



Entry into Jerusalem

Painted by Emma Major, Mum, wife, poet, artist, blind wheelchair driver, pioneer minister, author at LLMCalling.com

Dear Everyone

“Rejoice greatly Daughter Zion! Shout Daughter Jerusalem! See your King comes to you righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey”. Zachariah 9:9

Kamran asked in his sermon, “What is special about Jesus?” The crowds before him were shouting, “Hail King of Kings”. He came among them gently riding a donkey- he chose a donkey- a humble creature; he proclaimed himself a king on the one hand but, but on the other, he is not there to take over the city except, gently. This is all in keeping with the prophesy of Zachariah ch 9. Jesus’s way was, “Take me as a king as I am or reject me”, and in a few days that is just what the people did - reject him - leading to the horror of the crucifixion on the Cross – but also to be followed by the joy and hope of the Resurrection. The reaction of people is so familiar to us, as much in our time and countries, one-minute cheering and another rioting, full of discontent, as were the Israelites wondering in the desert, angry with Moses and God. It runs throughout history, it seems to be the lot of Human Nature but, as the psalms say, in the end God is always faithful.

Painting of Entry into Jerusalem: At the top of the newsletter is a painting by a remarkably gifted friend (with her permission), who describes herself as a “Mum, wife, poet, artist, blind wheelchair driver, pioneer minister, author. Her paintings of nature and religious themes never cease to inspire me.

Intercessions: this Sunday they were by Jenny who says, “This week I’ve been on a retreat in Northern Ireland, the theme of which was, **‘Being hopeful communities in anxious times’**. It seemed appropriate to use that theme of hope as the focus for our prayers this morning as the world is certainly in “anxious times” and in such a mess just about everywhere. We long for it to embrace peace and love between people as Jesus Christ would have us do. (Below)

Tony: has written up a talk he gave to us on Sunday 6th April in response to Kamran’s request for a volunteer to tell us how s/he reads the Bible. Tony came up and gave a full and interesting talk on the way he read the Bible. His talk is below. Thank you Tony for giving us so much to think about. Maybe we will ask ourselves

some questions in the light of what we have heard and read about from him about the way we read our Bibles. If anyone wishes to do this please contact Kamran and let him know. He would be pleased to hear from you.

Easter: Below is a poster of all the Services up to Easter Day starting on Palm Sunday and the Walk of Witness, where we processed round the outside of the church singing “Hosanna in the Highest”. We then walked, after the service, with others from Churches Together, down the High Street from the Library back to our church where prayers were said. A service of Tenebrae (Darkness) was held on Wednesday when members of the congregation each read a lesson and extinguished one of the candles after their reading- one after the other- symbolizing going from light to darkness and how dark the world would be without Jesus.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Last week on 9th April 1945, Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and theologian was hung at the Flossenbergl Concentration camp in Germany. I went to that camp when I was on a pilgrimage, “In The Steps of Bonhoeffer”, some years ago and will never forget it –a chilling place. The tragedy for him was that the end of the war was only two weeks away. He was a courageous man of great faith who was a founding member of the Confessing Church and an anti-Nazi dissident who stood up to Hitler and paid for his action. Below is a quote that is in keeping with our times at this moment and for Holy Week when the innocent suffer and give up their lives for a greater cause.

A Christian Presence in Each Community from the Church of England: As throughout Lent and now into Holy Week, we continue with the message sent to us by the CofE each week for us to **Read, Reflect** on and be **Challenged** by. This week it is about, “**Holy Week Transformed**”. I hope you have found these readings helpful.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM): Just to remind you that the date for the APCM is **Sunday 11th May after the Service**. Please make sure you get a form from Alexis or the table at the side of the church so you can be on our Electoral Role. It is important everyone in our church family is on the role. Ring Tracey at 020 8455 1873 or email her on, tracey@gg-pc.co.uk.

Wednesday Morning Coffee: from 10.30am-12noon; coffee, cake and a chat. Afterwards there is communion at 12noon. This week we have started, under the watchful eye of Ifey, some gentle exercises to keep us fit and flexible. Do come and join in – exercises first – followed by cake and coffee!

Listening and Learning, Bible Study: This date of this next session is April 24th at 6.30pm. We are reading through Romans and discussing what really speaks to us.

Toddler Group: There will be no Toddler Group for the next two weeks as it is the Easter holiday.

Pilgrimage: Just to let you know that immediately after Easter I am going on a Peace Pilgrimage to follow in the steps of St Frances. I shall be going to Florence, Sienna and Assisi plus other places where St Frances left his mark. So for two weeks I will not be producing the newsletter. I am looking forward to this pilgrimage very much and shall obviously be taking lots of photographs and keeping a record of my travels to include you in my adventure when I get back.

With love, good wishes and have a Very Happy Easter – Sally



Intercessions – Jenny
Intercessions Palm Sunday 13 April 2025

“First, I’m going to read a prayer by Liz Cooledge-Jenkins, an American Christian writer and preacher. At the end we’ll have a minute or two so each of us can reflect silently on whatever strikes us about it.

God,

Power runs through our world in such perverse ways.

We need new leaders,
the kind who have been moving and shaking
and healing and breaking chains all along.

These are the ones we want to listen to.

Help us hear the honest ones.

Help us not airbrush over their devastation
and try to make it look okay.

God, unbind us.

Keep exposing the nakedness of the emperor
until we finally get it.

Heal us of the bent ways [in which] we seek authority
and assume others to be authoritative.

Unbend our desires.

Straighten our spines.

Sometimes it seems hopeless.

And yet we light a candle that means “hope.”

We hope for the courage to be honest and to receive others’ honesty gratefully, not threatened by it.

We hope to access the deepest places in our souls
and move from them.

We hope not to run out of hope entirely.

And so we look for you, still, God.

Amen.

.....

One of the speakers at the retreat was Ruth Harvey, who leads the Iona Community which some of you may know – and may even have visited. The rest of our prayers are adapted from words in the Iona Abbey worship book:

When I say: 'He is the light of life' please respond: '**He is the hope of the world**'.

In quietness and darkness, in peace and confusion
Jesus wants to make his home and meet his friends.
He is the light of life: **He is the hope of the world**

In him there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Roman Catholic nor protestant. All are one in Jesus Christ.
He is the light of life: **He is the hope of the world**

In him there is neither Black nor white, neither north nor south. All are one in Jesus Christ.
He is the light of life: **He is the hope of the world**

In him there is neither male nor female, neither master nor servant. All are one in Jesus Christ.
He is the light of life: **He is the hope of the world**

In him there is neither rich nor poor, neither middle class nor working class: all are one in Jesus Christ.
He is the light of life: **He is the hope of the world**

.....

Now we'll pray for those who need the hope that Jesus gives. After each phrase we'll have a moment of silence so we can each pray for those we know.....

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those who suffer pain and ill-health, with their families, friends and those who care for them.....

...those who suffer in mind and spirit, and those who care for them.....

...those struggling to overcome addiction or abuse, those supporting and working with them, and all whose suffering has distanced them from those who love them.....

...those facing bereavement....

....the places everywhere in the world where people's lives are devastated by conflict, injustice and inequality..... Each of us will have places that are particularly on our hearts. I'd like to pray particularly about the ongoing and seemingly hopeless conflict in Israel and Gaza, the devastation of the lives of Israelis and Palestinians, the unimaginable suffering of the remaining hostages and their families, and the impact on the Palestinians of yesterday's attack by Israel on the last functioning hospital in Gaza City.....

We also lift to you those known to us who have died, thinking particularly of our lovely sister Diana, whose funeral took place on Tuesday.....

May everyone we've prayed for be encouraged by the hope that only Jesus can give. And with the help of your Holy Spirit may we be bringers of that hope. **Amen**



Reflection from Tony

Reading the Bible

“Following the interview with Rev Kamran this morning (6th April 2025) I thought I would expand on it. For many months I had wanted to encourage my brothers and sisters in their reading and studying God's Word. So, whilst seeking to protect myself from viruses during the recent winter, Kamran asked me about my practice and whether I would share it with in an interview. At first, we had planned to video it, but it turned into an in-person interview.

When Jesus met me many years ago in Nigeria, having what is called a 'quiet time' was suggested to me as the way to getting to know Jesus more and better. I would spend about 10 mins a day reading a passage, reading some notes and saying a prayer (other prayer time with fellow Christians was also part of my life), using Our Daily Bread. As some of you may know this is a monthly or quarterly publication from the USA. This was how I was living as my walk with the Lord had begun, along with home groups, where we would meet weekly to study the Bible and fellowship and Sunday services and talks in Christian unions at school and college (when I came to the UK) for many formative years.

As I mentioned in the interview, there was a curate at Christ Church Clifton, who challenged me in the Autumn of 1979 as to who would I follow, Jesus or just make money. I was about to go to Hamburg for 6 months before going on to university in late September 1980. Whilst in Hamburg learning German, the Lord challenged me to seek a closer relationship with Him. This was in about March 1980 and I resolved one of the things I would do is begin to read the whole Bible in a year alongside my daily quiet time. So, I began reading 3 or so chapters a day, as part of my winding to down to going to sleep.

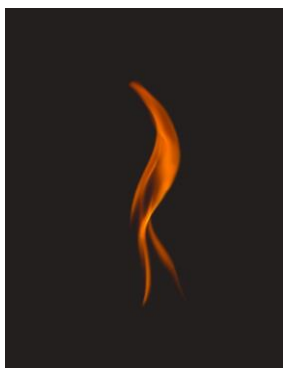
In late September that year, I would say I was struggling with reading the Bible in a year, when I came across a Bible Reading Plan at the Christian Union at University, which took me through the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice. I would every evening read the passages for the day. Whilst at University, my morning routine changed in that I moved from Our Daily Bread to Every Day with Jesus from what is now Waverley Abbey and for many years written by Selywn Hughes. Every Day aimed to take you through the Bible in three years and also gave you further passages to study with some questions. Years later, I found that Rev Hughes had "created" a version of the Bible to be read in a year which was arranged chronologically, even down events. Sometimes the Bible discusses an event after it had happened. So, for instance the events in Job come somewhere around the events of Abraham's life and so after reading a few chapters of Genesis you then read the whole of Job before going back to Genesis. Similar rearrangements would happen with the Gospels but also in the order in which Paul's letters are written. These would probe my thinking, my motivations and encourage action in following Jesus. I would follow this custom for many years.

I did not mention when I was interviewed, but I had a break from going through the Bible in a year for about 10 years. I still continued with my morning quiet times but family life did impact the evening quiet time. Around the time I arrived in Golders Green I was introduced to a Bible App, called Olive Tree. There are

several such apps available to us. This was like have a bookstore in the palm of your hand. Here I also found various plans for reading the Bible through in a year. So now I have a choice of plans to follow every year. Currently I am following one, which is similar to one I first used back in 1980s reading through the Old Testament once, and the New twice.

But as you might have picked up when Kamran interviewed me this morning, I also now use, and have used for the last 10 years, the Bible in One Year. This is from Alpha part of the Holy Trinity Brompton and written by Rev Nicky Gumbel to help young Christians. This takes one through the Bible in a year with themes for every day and commentary on the passages read, along with some comments from Pippa Gumbel. This is now called "The Bible with Nicky and Pippa Gumbel".

So, what have I learnt over the years. There are questions to which I have found answers and others not. Over the years I have grappled with some chronological issues, one of which was when the flood came in Genesis 7, I came to understand that all those between Adam and Noah had passed on before the flood came. But most important every year I get to see God's plan of salvation from the Fall through Abraham, David and Solomon and through to Jesus. Reading and understanding and studying every year reminds me that Jesus is Lord. And no matter what is happening in the world today, there is no need to be anxious (although we will be) because He knows what is happening.



Holy Week: Transformed

We've arrived at Holy Week. The week we dread, the week we long to reach. The week that holds both tragedy and triumph. As we spend each day together, inching our way toward the cross, we'll be focusing on the theme of 'Transformed'.

Prayer for the week

Lord, we don't have the words to thank you for what this week means, for what you did. May your word and your presence transform our hearts, and therefore our lives, over the coming days. Amen.

'Advocating' for truth

Holy Week:

Reading

John 16.7-13

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.



Reflection

Jesus knows that this week is going to be incredibly tough, not only for him, but the people who have been with him. It's about to be confusing, disorienting and incredibly painful. Perhaps that is why he chooses this moment to talk about the arrival of the 'Advocate' – the one we more often call the Holy Spirit – who would come at Pentecost.

Holy Spirit, the third person of the Three-In-One-God, has many names and does many things. So, it's interesting to wonder – why does Jesus specifically use the name 'Advocate' here? What is he trying to highlight?

I think a clue might be in verse 13, when Jesus then calls him 'the Spirit of Truth'. Many lies were about to be told about Jesus, lies which would lead to his execution. So, it's like Jesus is promising – someone is going to come and tell you the truth about me. It may not look like it, but the truth will win.

Challenge

Let's get deeper into this: when you think of the specific role of an 'Advocate', what do you think of? How might it have transformed mourning into hope?



Copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2025. Taken from the Living Hope booklets published by Church House

How We Are

As always, we send our love and prayers to all those who are sick. Please continue to pray for them that they gain in strength and good health; that God's healing hands may be upon them. Pray also for those who are grieving because of the loss of a loved one.

We continue to pray for the passing of Junior Junior Okechukwu Onochie, at 21 years old, Ifey, Onyeka and Ezims' nephew . We send our condolences to Sir Edmund, his grandfather, and all his family.

Please continue to pray for Keith, Sheila and Myfanwy and her former carer, Janet, who is seriously ill in hospital. Myfanwy grieves for Diana who was her friend, who used to ring her up every Sunday afternoon for a chat. Myfanwy said how much she will miss that.

We pray for Anita Houghton, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada, and Sheila Grodzinsky.

We hold all the above in our hearts that they may be filled with God's healing love.

Please continue to let us know of family members and friends who are sick and would welcome our prayers, either by WhatsApp, email, Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk or by phone, 020 8455 1873

Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0aDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

Reader:

Intercession:

Hospitality:

Eucharist Minister:

AV Desk:

Contact details:

Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti Office Tel: 020 8455 1873 Website: www.gg-pc.co.uk



**Golders Green Parish
Church**
All are welcome

✦ Holy Week Program

Palm Sunday Service

13 April 10 am at the Church

✦ Walk of the Witness (Church Together Procession)

13 April 1 pm meeting outside Golders Green Library

✦ Tenebrae service

16 April 6 pm at the Church

✦ South Asian Service (Fisah ki Sham)

17 April 6:30 pm at the Church

✦ The Good Friday

The Passion Service - 18 April 11 am at the Church

14 Stations of the Cross – 18 April 2:30 pm at the Church

✦ Easter Celebration

20 April 10 am at the Church

For any further information, feel free to contact: The Office 020 8455 1873.

Church website <https://www.gg-pc.co.uk/> -

Twitter <https://x.com/home?lang=en>

Golders Green Parish Church - St Albans Vestry, W Heath Dr, London NW11 7QG

GGPC ROTA

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
18/04/25 Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 John 18:1-19:42	Passion readers	TBC	Nora	Sally/			
20/04/25 Easter Sunday	Isaiah 65:17-25 John 20:1-18	Andrew	Alexis	Cynthia/Chinwe	Tim/Naila	Onyeka	Chinwe	
27/04/25	TBC	Elizabeth	Kai	Rose Dean/ Veronica	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Shaniv	Tim	
04/05/25	TBC	Sohail	Nwando	Bilan	Nehar/ Nwadi	Daniel	Florence	