

NEWSLETTER

9th January 2025



*Painting "Christ, der Retter ist da"
by Beate Heinen, 1989, ©Ars liturgica)*

Dear Everyone.

We have now come into the season of Epiphany. The word "Epiphany" is commonly interpreted as a moment when a person suddenly feels they understand, or are made conscious of something terribly important to them. We often hear stories of people who say they suddenly had an epiphany, a revelation, that changed their lives. The wise men experienced this very profoundly and were compelled to take a long journey to find this special baby that will change everyone's lives including their own. So, in the light of their epiphany they made the long trek carrying their gifts. to find the baby Jesus.

The important significance of the visit of the Wise Men to see Jesus is, that being gentiles from different parts of the world, they showed that he and what he represented was for everyone - that everyone was important and valued with no distinction. A fact that is crucially important for us to understand today and live out in our lives.

While I was thinking of what to write about Epiphany, that is so well known and celebrated, two of our Sunday School students, Christian and Nwanneka, said it all in their feedback to us at the end of the Service with such clarity and confidence. Christian on Christmas and Nwanneka on Epiphany. So, here is what they told us, and, thank you to both of them. They have given us four new year resolutions.

Christmas by Christian: *"Christmas is never over. The light of Christmas shines through our actions. We have to show, Peace. Love, Joy and Hope for one another. Amen."*

Epiphany From Nwanneka: *"Today I learnt about the Feast of the Epiphany. It is also known as the "Three Kings Day". You may ask why is it important? It is because it symbolizes the time it took for them to travel to baby Jesus to bring him gifts. Twelve days after Christmas many Christians take down the Christmas decorations, but the light of Christmas still shines. It is like a light that never fades away showing it is not*

over. This is because Christ became the Word that was spoken of by Moses and John. This Light is, Love, Joy, Hope and Peace. These four should be our guiding principles."

To show how Epiphany is seen by artists of different cultures I have put in some depictions of it throughout the newsletter. The first painting by, Sr Claire SMMI, contextualized to rural India. Here Epiphany commemorates three times when the divine-human nature of Jesus was manifested:

the visit of the Magi,
the baptism of Jesus,
and his first miracle.



<https://globalworship.tumblr.com/post/181697776680/3-scenes-of-epiphany-painted-by-sr-claire-india>

Below are three reflections on this season, one by the painter and Iconographer, Janet McKenzie, named "Night Visitors" in which she pays homage to the gentleness of men shown by the three wise men; the other by the poet, Jan Richardson, with a painting by Maya Telford of, "Three Wise Women" who they both see travelling to bring gifts to Mary. I have to say this is one of my most favourite poems of all. Inevitably the poet and priest, Malcolm Guite, has given his reflections on his poem, "'A Sonnet for Epiphany'", when he acknowledges the revelation, that the birth of Christ is not one small step for a local religion but "a great leap for all humankind". All three show the many different ways of looking at Epiphany.

Ann Onwutalu: It was with a great deal of shock and sadness that we heard that Ann died in Barnet Hospital on Wednesday 1st January. Ann, with Gideon her husband who she was nursing after his stroke, had been long-term and much loved members of our Golders Green Family. She was a gentle, sweet woman who will be so missed by her family and those of us who knew her. Rose, who knew Ann for many years has written an appreciation of her for us which is printed below. As many have said, "May her beautiful soul rest in peace".



Food Bank: This is just to remind you that we contribute provisions to All Saint's Food Bank. Please put contributions on the table in church and they will be taken to All Saints during the week. With many thanks

Wednesday Morning Coffee: from 10.30am-12noon; coffee, cake and a chat. Do come and join in.

Bible Study: This session will take place on Thursday, 9th January at 6.30pm.

Toddler Group: This group is in church every Tuesday from 9.30 – 11.30am. We are very grateful to all those who help and keep the group going. If anyone would like to volunteer to help during his time we would be very grateful to hear from you. Please talk to ifey or Kamran.

St Paul's invitation: Would anyone like to come with me to St Paul's Cathedral on Tuesday 11th February at 6.30pm to hear Chine McDonald talk on "Unmaking Mary"?
I shall be going as Chine is an excellent speaker and writer.

Unmaking Mary

Chine McDonald

At St Paul's Cathedral

Tuesday 11th February, 6.30-8pm

Admission Free, All Welcome

For two thousand years, the Virgin Mary has been depicted throughout art, literature and culture as symbolising the perfect mother: chaste, beautiful, meek, mild and white. These supposed virtues and symbols have penetrated not just Christianity but wider popular culture; and contributed to harmful views about motherhood and what it is to be a woman

Chine McDonald will deconstruct the myth of perfect motherhood and reflect on its theological, social and personal impact, proposing a more authentic, grace-filled way forward.

Chine McDonald is the Director of Theos, the religion and society think tank. Previously she headed community fundraising and public engagement at Christian Aid. The author of the best-selling *God is Not a White Man (and other revelations)*, her latest book is *Unmaking Mary: Shattering the Myth of Perfect Motherhood*.

Reserve free places

With love and good wishes for a hopeful and peace-filled New Year- Sally

Tribute to Ann Onwutalu – from Rose



It is with great shock and deep sorrow that we received the news of the sudden death of our dear sister and friend- Ann Onwutalu- whose husband -Gideon -has been on our regular prayer list for the past five years. Ann ;Gideon and their three children-Ugo ; Ije and Amaka ;worshipped in this church for nearly 30years until Gideon's illness and declining mobility necessitated Ann's full attention and care and their inability to join us for regular services. But Ann continued to maintain regular touch, attending special occasions including funerals of our departed church members as well as birthdays and other anniversaries. We all joined her and her family in celebrating her 70th birthday in this church a few years ago and only four months ago in Sept 2024 she joined us here to celebrate Rose's 85th birthday. Ann looked as beautiful; happy and healthy as ever on that day as can be seen from the photos. What a shock it was to hear that she passed away on New Year's day. How devastating this must be for her family!

Ann loved singing, had a lovely alto voice and was in our church choir for many years; and her son Ugo was our interim Organist during the 2005/6 Interregnum.

A nurse by profession, Ann had a warm, compassionate heart, and a kind, friendly disposition which we all admired. She will be sorely missed! May God receive her dear soul into eternal rest.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Gideon and their children and grandchildren at this very sad and difficult time. Rest in peace, dear Ann.

With love from all of us in your Golders Green Church Family

Rose



An image of Epiphany by Cameroonians artist group Jesus Mafa

"The Night Visitors" by Janet McKenzie



This is what, Janet McKenzie, the artist has to say about her painting of the Three Wise men.

"This is a painting about a journey taken at night, led by a star. The Night Visitors traveled under the bright light of a star to honor a newborn baby – this child sent for our salvation. It is also about Joseph, the earthly

father of Jesus, present to the child at birth, and onward, and it is about a strong, young mother, Mary, who was called by God.

Mary is the voice and the action of this painting and she looks at us with eyes conveying sadness, longing and admittedly, doubt. She presents the Christ Child yet holds on to him tightly, this swaddled baby whose sleeping face is circled in cloth. Only he has a simple pink halo.

The Night Visitors pays homage to the nurturing side of men. Sadly the quiet and gentle male spirit is not celebrated often enough. Here Joseph and the Magi have their eyes closed in contemplation and prayer reflecting longing for closeness to God, our shared experience. I was inspired by the good monks at Mepkin Abbey and by my own lovely son to create a work of art honoring the peaceful and tender side of men and what a beautiful thing that is”.

Wise Women Also Came.



Wise women also came.

The fire burned in their wombs long before they saw the flaming star in the sky.

They walked in shadows,

trusting the path would open under the light of the moon.

Wise women also came,

seeking no directions, no permission from any king.

They came by their own authority, their own desire, their own longing.

They came in quiet,

spreading no rumors, sparking no fears

to lead to innocents' slaughter, to their sister Rachel's inconsolable lamentations.

Wise women also came,

and they brought useful gifts:

water for labor's washing, fire for warm illumination, a blanket for swaddling.

Wise women also came,

at least three of them,

holding Mary in the labor, crying out with her in the birth pangs,

breathing ancient blessings into her ear.

Wise women also came,

and they went, as wise women always do,

home a different way.

Art by Maya Telford, words by Jan Richardson

A Sonnet for Epiphany –Malcolm Guite



“The Feast of the Epiphany falls on the 6th of January. Epiphany celebrates the arrival of the three wise men at the manger in Bethlehem and has a special mystery and joy to it. Until now the story of the coming Messiah has been confined to Israel, the covenant people, but here suddenly, mysteriously, are three Gentiles who have intuited that his birth is good news for them too. Here is an Epiphany, a revelation, that the birth of Christ is not one small step for a local religion but a great leap for all mankind.

I love the way that traditionally the three wise men (or kings) are shown as representing the different races and cultures and languages of the world. I love the combination in their character of diligence and joy. They ‘seek diligently’, but they ‘rejoice with exceeding great joy’! I love the way they loved and followed a star, but didn’t stop at the star, but rather let the star lead them to something beyond itself. Surely that is a pattern for all wise contemplation of nature whether in art or science”.

Epiphany It might have been just someone else’s story,
Some chosen people get a special king.
We leave them to their own peculiar glory,
We don’t belong, it doesn’t mean a thing.
But when these three arrive they bring us with them,
Gentiles like us,
their wisdom might be ours;
A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,
A pilgrim’s eye that sees beyond the stars.
They did not know his name but still they sought him,
They came from elsewhere but still they found;
In temples they found those who sold and bought him,
But in the filthy stable, hallowed ground.
Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice
To seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice.

Prayer

O God,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead us in our earthly pilgrimage,
and embolden us to shine your light in the world.
Amen.



Icon from Ethiopia

How We Are

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

Pray for Myfanwy Khan, who is not at all well. She is home now from the Royal Free and being well looked after by Florence her carer. Pray for Diana Turvie, who is recovering from a stomach ailment; for Anita and Simon Houghton, Tony Nwanodi, 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.

We remember Ann Onwutalu with love and sadness and pray for Gideon and their children at this time.

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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0xDaDhY2paUT09>

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

Jan - Feb 2025								
Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
12/01/25	Psalm 29	Andrew	Jenny	Bilan	Sally/	Daniel	Tim	Alexis
	Acts 8:14-17	Sim						
	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22							
19/01/25	Psalm 36:5-10	Sam	Kai	Naila	Tim/Naila	Oneyka	Florence	
	I Corinthians 12:1-11	Sohail						
	John 2:1-11							
26/01/25	Psalm 19	Elizabeth	Nehar	Cynthia/Chinwe	Daniel/Ezim	Ruth	Synthia	Jenny
	I Corinthians 12:12-31a	Dozie						
	Luke 4:14-21							
02/02/25	Psalm 71:1-6	Guy	Alexis	Nora	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Onyeka	Shaniv	
	I Corinthians 13:1-13	Keith						
	Luke 4:21-30							
09/02/25	Psalm 138	Khan	Simon	Silvia	Nehar/Nwadi	Shaniv	Chinwe	Nehar
	I Corinthians 15:1-11	Cynthia						
	Luke 5:1-11							