

NEWSLETTER

13th March 2025



Dear Everyone

Lent: Old Testament Series: During Lent, Kamran is conducting a series of talks, with videos, on the Old Testament. Each week he will be focusing on important themes of the OT books through key stories, in sequence, so we get a grasp of their importance to us. They are all prophetically signaled in the OT, showing how they lead us to the coming of Christ. We are doing this so we can see how the Old and New Testaments complement each other. We need scripture as Story as a journey from Creation, Redemption and Restoration. It is our story and through them we can see how the many witnesses are leading us by the Grace of God, to the Grace and life of Christ. Kamran invited us to give him feedback on our views how this is progressing each week.

Bishop of Edmonton's Sermon: Bishop Anderson delivered a powerful sermon at St John's College, University of Cambridge recently reflecting on the intersection of faith, change, and the challenges we face in or society. He offered profound insights into the role of the Church in a rapidly evolving world. The sermon, highlighted the dynamic nature of Christian life and the importance of continuity amidst transformation. He powerfully stated the importance of Paul's emphasis on Christian's following Christ's commandment "to Love one another" and being "counter cultural" to the society in which we live, which is as apt now as it was in his time. +Anderson preaches a powerful sermon. It is in full below.

Birthday Greetings: Happy Birthday to Daniel, Marina and Bilan. Prayers were said and Happy Birthday sung, wishing them a good year ahead.



Brenda's visit: How good it was to welcome Brenda Ling to our service this morning. Brenda has been a long term friend of Diana who died last week in the Royal Free. Brenda cared for her during the time she was increasingly ill and was with her when she died. Brenda said she held Diana's hand and told her she was loved as she passed away. We are going to miss Diana a great deal with her faithfulness and determination to attend the Sunday morning service, walking down the North End Road with her frame. A vase of flowers was placed in the area where she sat as a tribute to her. Kamran and Brenda are organizing Diana's funeral. The date will be put in the WhatsApp and Newsletter as soon as we know when it will be.



Junior Junior Okechukwu Onochie: We were very sorry to hear of the passing of Ifey, Onyeka and Ezims' nephew, Junior Junior Okechukwu Onochie, in Nigeria at 21 years old. Sir Edmund, Ezim, Onyeka and Ifey have flown out to his funeral. We send our condolences, prayers and love to them, his parents and all of his family at this sad time.

Visit to Magnolia Lodge: Last Thursday, Rose and I went to Magnolia Lodge Rest Home, for a Community Meeting and afternoon tea. We were invited to find out about all the groups that are available to Barnet residents to support our well-being in many different ways, and, there is so much. We took a selection of leaflets about activities and classes and have put them on the table in church. These include, Age Concern information about events such as, Lunch clubs, Coffee mornings, creative writing courses, musical afternoons, Living Well in Barnet, held at the RAF Museum on the 18th March focusing on memory and dementia prevention, walking groups, Pilates and so many other events including regular drop-in session at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley, every Monday from 2.00-4.00pm if you need help with your laptop, smart phone or tablet. (Contact Howard 020 8432 1415). Please pick up a leaflet. Thank You to Dr Jayda for inviting us, Philip Amos, the Home Services Adviser, and the residents for making us feel so welcome.



World Day of Prayer- From Rose: "I attended this year's "World Day of Prayer" last Friday. It was held at St Edward the Confessor RC church. It was a lovely service but attendance was very poor this year and I was the only one from our church! We did enjoy the warmth of the fellowship. The organisers asked how Sheila

was doing and sent their good wishes. I told them the Rev Kamran and Sally had visited her in hospital last week. They said they needed someone to replace her on the Committee, so I volunteered. They invited me to the next Planning Committee meeting on 21 March. Next years' service (2026) will be hosted by our church at Golders Green; the focus country will be Nigeria & the theme is "I will give you rest- come!". How good that it is to be at our church. We will advertise it widely and hope it will be very well supported.



Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM): Please note 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. **if you attend the service on Sunday on-line** please let her know and you will get one by email or through the post. You can ring Tracey at 020 8455 1873 or email her on, tracey@gg-pc.co.uk. At the meeting there is an opportunity to hear about the business of the church; reports are made on finance, various activities, the state of the building and how things generally are progressing. Elections take place for Church wardens and members of the Parochial Church Council. So you can see how important this meeting is and how everyone's input is vital and welcomed.

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

Listening and Learning, Bible Study: This date of this next session is March 20th. We spend time reading through Romans and discussing what really speaks to us.

Toddler Group: This group meets in church every Tuesday from 9.30 – 11.30am.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help during his time we would be very pleased to hear from you. Please talk to Ifey or Kamran.

With love and good wishes - Sally



A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen



Change and Transformation - Colossians 3:1-17 – Bishop Anderson at St. John's College Chapel 9th February 2025

"It is remarkable and fascinating how 'ordered love' 'Ordo Amoris' a theological idea, has become so popular among some proponents of Christianity to legitimise new political ordering. The last couple of weeks saw the unfolding of a new unhinged politics, that allows people's homeland that was destroyed can be reimagined as a privately owned posh Riviera or millions of people could be sent back via 'mass deportation'. Any country or nation can be randomly penalised, taxed or even annexed!

Climate change is a conspiracy and global warming is a myth. There is no moral obligation for foreign aid. Tech tyrants will fix our lives. Well, the remixed version of brave new world order Pax Americana, which is conjured up in the mind of a real-estate leader of the democratic world has firmly taken over the news headlines. This is nothing new, but has been the lingering characteristics of empires and authoritarian regimes for centuries. Our church isn't far behind in terms of crisis. As we reflect on Change and transformation, reading the letter of Paul to Colossians in the shadow of imperial vestiges offers a fresh perspective for rethinking the characteristics of ekklesia, the church, both local and universal.

Paul writes to the fledgling Christian community in Colossae, a prominent city in the Roman empire. He outlines an emerging ecclesiology, built around Jesus Christ, a critical alternative to the dominant Roman worldview, a new understanding of community, renewed and restored. What did it mean to be the body of Christ in the eternal Roman empire? Firstly, The Roman empire was built on systemic centralisation of power, reinforced by socio-economic and military power. Religious myths legitimised it, which in turn shaped the imperial culture. In this backdrop Paul offers a subversive imagination to the early Christian communities in Colossae. We could hear Paul's saying strip away oneself of the marks of Roman empire, anger, wrath, malice, slander, abuse and lies. He then invites them to clothe oneself in Christ, with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, forgiveness, and patience.

Paul's idea was directly opposed to the Roman imperial politics of idolatry. A counter cultural way of living, which is rooted in a renewed knowledge and understanding of mutuality in Christ. Secondly, the Roman worldview was formed around hierarchy and exclusion. In contrast, Paul proposes an expansive worldview: redemptive inclusion: "there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all (3:11)".

Pauline notion of a capacious and inclusive community was fundamentally opposed to the segregated, graded, and exclusive Roman society. With Christ at the centre, Paul urged Christians in Colossae to distinguish themselves from the Roman social and communal thinking. Paul urges them to hold each other accountable and responsible. By embodying Christian virtues as the marks of the church, Paul pleaded to the Christian community to pave the way for a new way of life in the Roman empire. Thirdly, the church in Colossae, opposed to the empire was inevitably political. The Pauline conception of 'the church' was not simply a small group of desperate believers, but an imagination of humanity that had the potential to be the body of Christ, an alternative to the empire.

The Pauline counter cultural community was seen as an embodiment of love and practical outworking of the virtues it embraced (i.e, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, and forgiveness). The love mentioned in this epistle unifies, heals, and "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (3:14). In the marketplace of Roman empire, Paul resisted the commodification of love. In the midst of fragmentation and division, Paul's idea of love actively sought to reconcile, not through transactional fudging of relationships, but through the pursuit of justice. For Paul love is the substance of justice. Life shaped by love rather than hatred, see the world through the eyes of Jesus. Fourthly, the peace of Christ advocated in this letter was brought about by the pursuit of love and justice. The Roman empire achieved peace through violence and raw military power. Fear, terror, and anxiety was fermenting under the surface. On the contrary, the Pauline pathway to peace was through love and justice. Paul intentionally contrasts the peace of Christ with the violence of the empire. Inclusion and fullness of life, in opposition to exclusion and extermination. Paul encourages gratitude and humility to direct the minds of Christians. These Pauline exhortations of the body of Christ, the church, bears the core features of resistance to the empire, leading to renewal and transformation, both within the church and outside. Paul's radicality of God offers a subversive relational ethic. Is it possible to envision such a church that does not bow the knee to the empire and its idols? Can the church embrace renewal that dares to imagine a world beyond its current brokenness? How can the body of Christ break free and set the whole creation free from its bondage? I think the answer is a resounding yes. No doubt that our church and the society that we inhabit is broken, fractured, fragmented, and dismembered. They bear the marks of the empire. The violent empires may have faded but their legacies and obsessions linger on. Our church is a victim of such imperial entitlement and privilege. It allowed abuse of the vulnerable and continues to exclude people through its entrenched hierarchy. It perpetuates prejudice in the name of tradition and orthodoxy. Enforces loyalty through its network of beliefs and practices. We shouldn't shy away from naming it. I believe fragmentation of our beings often happens under the weight of disembodied tradition and misguided orthodoxy. Like me, you may have been consumed by despair at the current state of affairs, that is, if we approach the Church simply as an organisation or institution that is broken to the core. However, if we return to the organic imagery of the church as the body of Christ by Paul, a living and breathing body, there is hope. It is not a coincidence that Paul holds up before us the abused, violated, and tortured body of a victim as a frame of reference for the church. The risen body of Christ does not erase the scars of abuse and torture, but it is precisely through it the redemptive love of God shines. That's why Paul returns to that idea again and again in his letters. It is extraordinary how as a 'church' that worships and built around, a broken, tortured, and abused body of Christ, goes on to break, torture and abuse other vulnerable bodies in its fold. Just like the frightened friends of Jesus living in the imperial shadows, healed back the loving community through carefully tending with love, we are called to carry out the God's sacramental work of repairing the broken church. To do that we ought to heed the Pauline call of stripping away the influences of the empire, which ignores the wretchedness and pain of innocent people, and embrace a new character, clothing oneself afresh with skills, virtues and practices of the subversive Christian community. In this unpredictable and unstable world, the purpose of the church is to practice love that gathers and knits together a community that has been disembodied, dismembered and scattered by

the machinery of social media. As an alternative to the imperial polity, the body of Christ, ought to step into God's imagination. We are not just a small band of desperate believers, but a living breathing body of Christ, called to live in the light of God's emerging future, God's Now and Not Yet. We have to fan the fickle flame of hope so that it might animate our faithful living rooted in the mind of Christ. Dear sisters and brothers, we are called to embody the scandalous and subversive body of Christ, to resist destructive imperial tendencies, by out-imagining evil, holding before people an impossible possibility, thereby bringing healing and renewal to the broken world. Let me finish with the prophetic words of Amanda Gorman, a young poet, "For there is always light, If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it". Amen."



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.

As mentioned above, we were very sorry to hear of the passing of Ifey, Onyeka and Ezims' nephew, Junior Junior Okechukwu Onochie, at 21 years old. 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 is at home being cared for by Florence. She is unwell but keeping positive. Keith is home and taking it carefully after a heart procedure; how good it was to see him back in church. Sheila is still in the Royal Free being well looked after. We send our love and prayers to Tony who we miss very much and hope that soon he will well and able to be back with us.

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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0xDaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

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

GGPC Rota March – April 2025

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
16/03/25	Psalms 8	Guy Keith	Simon	Rose Dean/Veronica	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Onyeka	Shaniv	
23/03/25	Genesis 12:1-3	Khan Cynthia	Rose	Silvia	Nehar/Nwadi	Shaniv	Chinwe	
30/03/25	Exodus 3:1-15	Nwennak a Abi	Tony	Bilan	Tim/Naila	Daniel	Florence	
06/04/25	John 1:29-37	Guy Keith	Alexis	Nora	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Onyeka	Shaniv	
13/04/25	TBC	Khan Cynthia	Simon	Silvia	Nehar/Nwadi	Shaniv	Synthia	Nehar
20/04/25	TBC	Nwennak a Andrew	Nehar	Rose Dean/Veronica	Daniel/Ezim	Dozie	Chinwe	
27/04/25	TBC		Jenny	Cynthia/Cynthia	Sally/	Ruth	Tim	Alexis
		Sim Poppy Sohail						
04/05/25	TBC		Kai	Naila	Tim/Naila	Oneyka	Florence	