

NEWSLETTER

16th January 2025



Dear Everyone.

Epiphany week 1: This is the first week of the Season of Epiphany when Jesus was baptized by John; the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a Dove, and a voice came from `heaven saying, “You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:15-17. 21-22) As Malcolm Guite says when he writes about Epiphany, “The season of Epiphany is an invitation to reflect on the many little ‘epiphanies’, glimpses of how things really are, which are vouchsafed us in the Gospel. Today, the first Sunday of Epiphany is a time to reflect on the moment when the heavens opened and we were given a glimpse of Father, Son and Holy Spirit at the heart of all things.” Malcolm’s poem is below.

Perhaps this is a time for each of us to reflect on our “Little Epiphanies”, what they mean and how they have changed us.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:



The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an ecumenical Christian observance that is celebrated internationally. It is kept annually between Ascension Day and Pentecost, between 18 January and 25 January. The importance of praying and working for Unity among all Christians cannot be overemphasized

at this time of unrest and uncertainty, in the Church at home, here in the United Kingdom, and with those across the world of whatever denomination. Christians are called to live in Peace, Love and Harmony with each other in a world of complete upheaval, injustice and unrest. To quote the description given, “There are seven elements that unite us; one body [of believers], one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. Each of these common areas is greater than any potential differences we may have”. We could be a role model of Faith to the world and, as St James says in his letter to new Christians, we can do so with “Prayer and Good works” to try and make it happen.

GOLDERS GREEN & DISTRICT CHURCHES TOGETHER

**SERVICE OF PRAYER
FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

19th January 2025, 2.30pm



All Saints Church, Child's Hill
Church Walk, NW2 2TJ

PREACHER
THE REV'D ALED JONES
MINISTER,
HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB FREE CHURCH

A part of Churches Together in Britain and
Ireland's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

All are welcome!

Intercessions by Jenny: Please see below the prayers of intercession from for the week of Christian Unity that takes place next week. They are full of all the issues we need to pray for that are causing us so much harm and tension in the world.

Sunday Service: Next Sunday is our **Bring and Share lunch**. Please let Rose and/or Ifey know what you are bringing. Our lunches are always so enjoyable with such a variety of dishes. Thank you in advance.

In Memory of Ann: Part of this coming Sunday Service is going to be dedicated Ann Onwutalu, who died on New Years Day. As Rose said, in the last newsletter, in her appreciation of Ann, she had “a warm, compassionate heart, and a kind, friendly disposition which we all admired. She will be sorely missed!”. It is hoped that as many who knew her will come to the Service to pay their respects to her memory and show their love to Gideon and their children, Ugo, Ije and Amaka.

Anniversaries and Thanks: the congregation gave many congratulations to Donald and Veronica on their 31st wedding anniversary, wishing them much love for their many Happy Years together, now and in the future.



We then gave a gift to our “Father Christmas” with our thanks for visiting us over Christmas and bringing many presents as well as giving us such a lot of his time. Sohail and Rose accepted it on his behalf as he and his elves were probably having a much deserved rest!



Naila joined Kamran on behalf of their beloved son, Joel, whose birthday it was. In his absence we prayed for him and sung Happy Birthday.



A bit of Grace: You may remember my writing about Gracija, the cat, who lives in (and probably owns!) St Saviour’s Church in Riga, Latvia. The chaplain is Eliza Zikmane, a good friend of mine, who often comes over to the UK. I have been over to visit her several times. Gracija is undoubtedly a character with her own mind,

who likes to wonder round the vicinity of the church and is known by many, especially in the restaurants. She recently went missing for several days and caused much concern, as she is so loved, but was eventually found and brought back. I noticed when I was visiting the first thing people said when coming into church was, "Where is Gracija". She is loved and loves everyone in return. I am sure she gives her own support and service within the church from the pleasure she gives. Below is a piece (copied with their permissions) taken from St Saviour's Newsletter on her latest doings which I thought you might like to read.

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.

Listening and Learning, Bible Study: This session will take place on Thursday, 23rd 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"? Invitation below.

I shall be going as Chine is an excellent speaker and writer.

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



Snowdrops at Kew Gardens from Jenny

Intercessions 12.1.2025

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Prayers from Jenny

"This year's *week of prayer for Christian Unity* begins on Saturday. I'm anticipating that in our prayers this morning by adapting words written for this week of prayer by the Bose monastic community in Italy.

I'll begin with an introduction and follow that with a time of silence: I'll follow that with one of their reflections and again, we'll have a few moments after that to reflect silently on anything that may have stood out for you".

Introduction:

The Spirit of God from the beginning has breathed life. We are called to live with humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We cannot live out this call in our own strength, rather we must receive the gift of God's Spirit within us, like the disciples gathered in the upper room. Jesus, appearing to the disciples, said: 'Peace be with you' and showing them his hands and his side, breathed on them

When we live apart from the Spirit we lose our breath and return to dust, but when we look to Jesus for life and breath, we are recreated for the work of renewal and for the co-creation of the dream of God to be made real here and now. That is our common calling as we are sent into the world in the power of the Spirit.

Reflection

Swirl of dust moving along the face of the ground,
untameable presence hovering above the water,
flicker of flame and wisp of smoke.

There,
there you are.

Breathing, dancing, tending, challenging, bristling with energy.

By your breath,
your dreams for the world are made into flesh and bone,
animated by your love,
we can be fire dancers, peace breathers and bone shakers.

Lord of life, we receive all creation from your hand and by your providence. Teach us to live in your world with care and seeking justice for all that you have created. This week we are conscious of the extreme weather across the UK, and even more the devastation and tragedies caused by the wild fires in California. We lift to you everyone who is affected, asking for your comfort, protection and restoration. We know that the changing climate has made these events worse than they would have been. We think also of the millions of people in the poorest parts of the world whose lives are also being devastated by the changing climate but who don't get the media coverage. Creator God we need you to keep on reminding us that we all have a part to play in turning this crisis around. Please will you show us what that is, and motivate us to do it?.....

Loving God, grant us the gift of hope in abundance in a world troubled by division and violence. Strengthen your people afflicted by apathy and fear.

God there's so much conflict, land-grabbing, greed, so many people everywhere are being persecuted, exploited and marginalised. This week

we particularly pray for the victims and survivors of the grooming and rape gangs in this country, and of all forms of gender-based violence and abuse wherever they are in the world. . May they experience healing, hope, peace and justice. Will you guide our politicians towards responses that are right and good and give them the courage to pursue those?.....

Merciful God, forgive us for the times we have failed to live a common life as Christians. Draw us more deeply to one faith in you so that we may witness to the world. God, we're so conscious of divisions between and within denominations, It's easy to be so distracted and agitated by our differences and disagreements that we don't see what unites us. Will you show all of us what's really important in your great plan and help us to focus and work together on that?

Holy Spirit, Heavenly Comforter, we pray that we may trust more in the gifts of your truth, wisdom and love than in the cleverness of our thinking. There's been so much in the news this week about the digital world including Artificial Intelligence and social media. Will you help us to discern and celebrate what is good in it, and to notice and reject what is destructive and abusive?.....

Compassionate Lord, lead us to work together so that wherever there is darkness and oppression, suffering and injustice, we may bring your light and freedom.....

Almighty God,

accept our praise and thanksgiving
for what already unites us.

Hasten the hour when we will recognise each other
in the one communion you willed
and for which your Son prayed.

Blessed be God, now and forever. Amen

The First Sunday of Epiphany -Jesus' Baptism - Malcolm Guite
The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings



Epiphany on the Jordan

Beginning here we glimpse the Three-in-one;
The river runs, the clouds are torn apart,
The Father speaks, the Sprit and the Son
Reveal to us the single loving heart
That beats behind the being of all things
And calls and keeps and kindles us to light.
The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings
'You are belovèd, you are my delight!'

In that quick light and life, as water spills
And streams around the Man like quickening rain,
The voice that made the universe reveals
The God in Man who makes it new again.
He calls us too, to step into that river
To die and rise and live and love forever.

A Bit of Grace – from St Saviour's Church Riga

Grācija or Grace, our church cat, now has a magical self-heating pad to keep her warm in her little igloo of a house. She likes to attend services and concerts when she isn't napping on someone's lap or in her house...



... but she still likes to wander through the neighborhood, checking in on her favorite restaurants and bars. Here she is leaving Lāsīte, a charming and very old restaurant next to the church. How old? It was opened in 1454 and is considered the oldest, continually serving restaurant in Riga.

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



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 still unwell from a stomach ailment, for Anita Houghton, Tony Nwanodi, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada, and Sheila Grodzinsky. Anita has asked us to pray for her good friend, Angela Dhillon, who is about to go into hospital for an operation.

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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0aDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

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

Passcode: J4FbKf

Contact details:

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