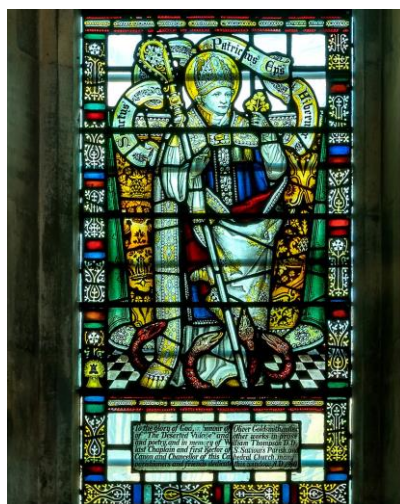


NEWSLETTER

20th March 2025



*St Patrick stained Glass Window
Southwark Cathedral*

Dear Everyone

Lent: Old Testament Series Week 2: Following on from last week, the focus was on how each book in the bible moves the story line towards Jesus. How, in Genesis, **Creation, Redemption and Restoration** brings us towards Jesus and the Grace given by God that saves us. **Genesis 12** onward showed, exactly that; how God worked through Abraham and his troublesome family, who fought in opposition to each other, argued, killed and tried to take the blessing that was rightfully another's. Blessing is an important principle of Salvation, it is more than the word we commonly use, but means deep fulfilment and "Shalom", which has a deep meaning of "Wholeness". Each immediate descendent of Abraham's family wronged the other; they went against God's laws, but, in spite of that, through their story (and plenty of others in the bible) God showed how forgiveness is given to the most difficult and unlikely people; that alone cannot be anything but a relief to many of us! Kamran highlighted the fact that salvation after rejection was exactly what Jesus experienced and showed that when Jesus was resurrected he, "lifted up his hands and blessed the onlookers" (Luke 24 v 150) bringing Grace. We all need Blessing in our lives.

Diana's Funeral: This will take place on **Tuesday 8th April in church at 12.30pm**; followed by a cremation at 'Golder's Green Crematorium at 2.00pm. It is hoped as many of our church family will be able to attend to remember one of our oldest and most faithful friends.

Psalms: How are you getting on with your Lenten practice? Have the psalms we focused on for a couple of weeks in the newsletter been helpful? Whatever you have chosen to do I hope it is going well.

"A Christian Presence in each Community": The Church of England is sending each week a piece that contains a short biblical text, a comment and a challenge for us to carry out. This week the focus has been on **Psalms 13**, one to add to our list of psalms we have been keeping. How apt it is to our present context. It touches so many aspects of how we are feeling on a personal, national and international level. It says so

well, as psalms do, just what we want or need to say. It helps us to Lament about so many issues, actions and feelings, that it is quite overwhelming. Please read it (below) and, with it, try the challenge that has been set for us and see what you think.

Simon's Intercessions: In his intercessions last Sunday, Simon prayed about many issues that concern us today. Not only do we pray for what seems the ceaseless wars in Ukraine, Gaza and the West Bank, but he pointed out that a report from the Geneva Academy highlights more than 45 current armed conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa alone. We couldn't help but notice the long list of countries he prayed for and know of the suffering of so many innocent women, men and especially the children who deserve none of this. We continue to pray for them and the peacemakers who give their lives to work tirelessly for peace.

St Patrick's Day: was on Monday 17th March. I am not sure how many in our church family are Irish or are of Irish descent, but Patrick is a well-known and interesting saint who was not Irish himself. He was kidnapped from England by pirates and taken as a slave to Ireland. He worked there for several years and became a Christian in his slavery. When he escaped and came back to England, he had a vision telling him he must return to Ireland and preach Christianity there. There are many stories told about him and he is best remembered by the Hymn, "St Patrick's Breastplate". Below is a poem written by Malcolm Guite in memory of him. The picture at the top of the newsletter is of the stained glass window of St Patrick, in Southwark Cathedral, portraying him driving out the snakes from Ireland.



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. 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 Do come and join in.

Listening and Learning, Bible Study: This date of this next session is April 06th. 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 please talk to Ifey or Kamran.

With love and good wishes – Sally



Vera Kavura, Ukrainian artist.

Intercessions from Simon

praying for the end of violence across the world and issues we face in the United Kingdom.

“This morning we heard the story of Cain and Abel – a story of pointless violence. So, we pray for the world...”

Almighty Father, whose will is to restore all things in your beloved Son: govern the hearts and minds of those in authority, and bring the families of the nations, divided and torn apart by the ravages of war and violence, to be subject to his just and gentle rule.

We pray today for the peace talks taking place over the war in Ukraine. We pray for good faith from all parties, including Russia, Ukraine and the United States. We pray that a cease fire can be brokered, and that agreement can be finally reached for the benefit of all those in that region of the world.

We continue to bring before you Lord, the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, as the fragile cease fire and the second stage of the hostage swap hang in the balance, with deep mistrust on both sides.

We pray for all those struggling to survive in all parts of the world where conflict continues, including:

Yemen, Syria, Libya, Myanmar, Somalia, Cameroon, Haiti and Pakistan

As a report from the Geneva Academy highlights more than 45 current armed conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa alone, we pray this morning for those who have died, those who are left behind, those who are displaced and those who are traumatized.

We pray with humility for our troubled brothers and sisters everywhere in the world. May we dare to hope that through the generosity of the privileged, the destitute might glimpse hope, warmth and life again. Mahatma Gandhi once said: “An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind...”

We pray for our country...

Lord God, we pray for your protection on our Royal Family and members of the Government and Opposition. We pray that you will grant wisdom, empathy and awareness to all those in positions of authority in this country, that they may govern with fairness and understanding for the plight of all who struggle in our society.

Today is Young Carers Action Day, and as we consider all those who care for others in our society – young and older – we ask that they be recognised and supported. There are 2½ million carers in employment in this country, and nearly 6 million people provide some level of unpaid care. As the government has again delayed the introduction of important changes, we pray that the need to reform the care sector and provide better support for both paid and unpaid carers will be prioritised.

In a week where the disbanding of NHS England has been announced, we pray that this will signal a return to patient-centred care at every level of the National Health Service and in every hospital Trust. We pray for auxiliary staff, nurses, doctors and all who play a role in the administration of the NHS. We pray that they will be guided by you. We ask that you give them your strength, your guidance and your understanding in all that they do. We pray that they will conduct themselves for the benefit of all your people.



The Church of England - a Christian presence in every community.

Read

Psalm 13

How long will you forget me, O Lord; for ever?
 How long will you hide your face from me?
 How long shall I have anguish in my soul
 and grief in my heart, day after day?
 How long shall my enemy triumph over me?
 Look upon me and answer, O Lord my God;
 lighten my eyes, lest I sleep in death;
 Lest my enemy say, 'I have prevailed against him,'
 and my foes rejoice that I have fallen.
 But I put my trust in your steadfast love;
 my heart will rejoice in your salvation.
 I will sing to the Lord,
 for he has dealt so bountifully with me.

Reflection

Lament involves bringing our raw, unfiltered emotions - our pains and struggles - before God. Yet how many of us truly understand how to lament?

Psalm 13 provides a biblical example: David, feeling abandoned by God, boldly asks, 'How long?'. But even in his pain, he holds onto the hope that God will answer. The healing may not have been immediate, but David's attitude had changed. Lament creates a space where we confront our struggles, but also remain confident in God's power to save.

The theologian Emmanuel Katongole describes how lament gives voice to those experiencing profound grief, enabling them to reclaim agency and move forward.

Learning to lament - to be completely honest with God - takes practice. But, when we discover that God welcomes us and wants to meet us exactly where we are, we find lasting hope.

Challenge

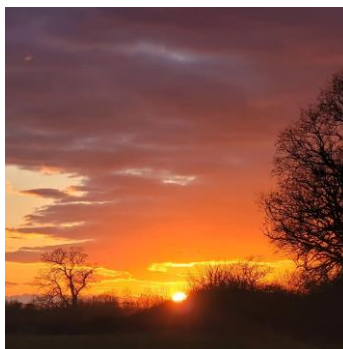
Think of a situation where you long for change. Can you express your honest feelings to God without tidying them up first? It might help to write them down or say them aloud.



Saint Patrick – Malcolm Guite

“Here is my sonnet for Saint Patrick’s day, with a prayer that we might share his ‘passion and compassion’ wherever we are. While Patrick is of course primarily associated with Ireland where he flourished as a missionary in the second half of the fifth century, he was not Irish to begin with. He seems to have been a shepherd on the mainland of Great Britain and was in fact captured there, at the age of sixteen, by raiding pirates and taken across the sea to Ireland where he was sold as a slave. He was six years in captivity before he finally made his escape and returned to Britain. And this is where the story takes a truly extraordinary turn. While he was enslaved in Ireland, working as a shepherd for his masters, Patrick became a Christian and when, having made good his escape, he returned home he had a vision in which a man gave him a letter headed ‘The Voice of Ireland’, a letter urging him to go back to the very place from which he had escaped and bring the Gospel to his former captors! That Patrick obeyed such a vision seems to me a greater miracle than any of the others subsequently attributed to him, and it is on this return that my sonnet turns. That capacity to return, face and forgive former oppressors or enemies seems a particularly vital gift for Ireland’s patron to bestow. As well as alluding briefly to ‘St. Patrick’s Breastplate’, my sonnet also touches on the story that wherever Patrick planted his staff to pray, it blossomed”.

Patrick Six Years a Slave,
 and then you slipped the yoke,
 Till Christ recalled you, through your captors cries!
 Patrick, you had the courage to turn back,
 With open love to your old enemies,
 Serving them now in Christ, not in their chains,
 Bringing the freedom He gave you to share.
 You heard the voice of Ireland, in your veins
 Her passion and compassion burned like fire.
 Now you rejoice amidst the three-in-one,
 Refreshed in love and blessing all you knew,
 Look back on us and bless us, Ireland’s son,
 And plant the staff of prayer in all we do:
 A gospel seed that flowers in belief,
 A greening glory, coming into leaf.



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 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. 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. Keith is back with us but taking it carefully after a heart procedure; how good it was to see him back in church reading the lesson. 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

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

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
23/03/25	Exodus 3:1-15	Cynthia	Rose	RoseDean/ Veronica	Tim/Naila	Shaniv	Chinwe	
30/03/25 Bring & Share	John 1:29-37	Abi	Nwadi	Cynthia/C hinwe	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Daniel	Florence	
06/04/25	John 3:9-15	Guy	Nehar	Bilan	Nehar/ Nwadi	Dozie	Shaniv	
13/04/25 Palm Sunday	Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 19:28-40	Nwenna ka	Jenny	Naila	Daniel/Ezim	Ruth	Synthia	Nehar
18/04/25 Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 John 18:1-19:42	TBC	TBC	Nora	Sally/			
20/04/25 Easter Sunday	Isaiah 65:17-25 John 20:1-18	Andrew	Alexis	Cynthia/C hinwe	Tim/Naila	Onyeka	Chinwe	
27/04/25	TBC	Elizbeth	Kai	Rose Dean/ Veronica	Ifeyinwe /Onyeka	Shaniv	Tim	