



20th February 2025



Dear Everyone - Hoping all is well with you.

On Sunday, Kamran preached about Rejection. He asked, “What is it like to feel rejected?” How do we deal with disappointment and rejection? We can go into ourselves, retreat into our little corners or let fear of more failure cripple us, or, we can keep going with perseverance and hope, and not stop, but let it be a learning process. He was saying this in the light of the Gospel reading (Luke 4) when Jesus, preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth was saying words that the hearers did not want to hear. He was turning their worlds upside down. All the people listening were furious when they heard what he had to say and drove him out. Hence his saying, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown”. But Jesus persevered and carried on with his ministry and his teaching because he had God’s blessing and knew he could do no other. Jesus told us, *“not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our mind”*. As Kamran pointed out, and we well know, that God’s voice and Jesus’s message are very hard to hear in the many different ways it comes, especially in the mist of all the noise, violence and disagreements of our times, that tear us apart. No wonder we need prayer, silence and meditation to help and guide us.

Intercessions by Jenny: Interestingly Jenny’s intercessions spoke directly to Kamran’s sermon on being counter cultural and the risk this entails regarding being rejected, as many people throughout history have found out. Her prayers are strong and encouraging so they are put in full below to help and guide us when we feel we need it.

Birthday Greetings: It was Theo’s turn to have birthday greetings from us all. Theo and his brother, Andrew, take such a full part in Sunday School and feeding back to us, with increasing confidence, about the lessons they have both learned. Kamran said a prayer for Theo and we all sang Happy Birthday.



St Valentine's Day: During the week it was Valentine's Day; cards, chocolates and flowers being sold galore. St Valentine was a 3rd century Roman priest or bishop who ministered to persecuted Christians and cured those who were sick. He is also known as the patron saint of Epileptics and bee keepers. He was martyred, it is said, on February 14th. Malcolm Guite has written a sonnet about him in the light of those who question why he should be seen as the Patron Saint of Love. (Below).

Psalms: I asked last week about your favourite psalms and if you would be prepared to share them in the Newsletter. They could be shared among us and make for personal reading and meditation during Lent. So far a number of you have identified the ones you like best, and, as Keith said on Sunday, "I expect the, "top of the Pops" would be the 23rd Psalm. He wasn't wrong. However, I have collected the favourites you have offered so far. Do carry on adding to them. It is so good to see the variety we have chosen among us. Below. Jenny has written a piece about her favourite.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM): This will take place on **Sunday 11h May after the Service**. It is probably the most important meeting of the year as it involves **all** members of the Church Family and you are **all** invited to attend. This year we have to compile the **Electoral Role** from scratch so it is important that everyone completes an Electoral Role Form. Alexis is in charge of distributing the forms and collecting them.

Please make sure you get one and, **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 everyone's input is vital and welcomed.

Afternoon Tea invitation: This invitation below is to us all from, Jeyda Korusoy, Prevention and Wellbeing Coordinator (Childs Hill, East Finchley and Hampstead Garden Suburb) Communities, Adults & Health Directorate. The afternoon tea will take place at Magnolia Court, care home, full address on invitation. Tell your friends about it as there may be areas of information they are interested in. Do come. It sounds interesting, informative and fun!

Community Meeting with Afternoon Tea

6th March
2:30-4pm
Magnolia Court
Care Home
181 Granville
Road
NW2 2LH

Join us for a chat, advice and information with:

- **Prevention and Wellbeing**
- **Barnet Carer's Centre**
- **Age UK**
- **Social Prescriber**
- **Five Bells Computer Club**

There will be
live music
and afternoon
tea!








Food Bank: This is just to remind you that we would really welcome more contributions for the Food Bank at All Saint's Church. There is increasing need among families. Please put contributions on the table in church which will be taken to All Saints during the week. With many thanks.

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 to come. We spend time discussing what really speaks to us. So far we have reached chapter 13.

Bring and Share Lunch: will take place **this Sunday**. Please let us know on WhatsApp what you would like to bring. All dishes welcome.

Toddler Group: This group meets 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.

Please continue to pray for Diana and Myfanwy both of whom are still very unwell. We send them our good wishes and prayers and hope they begin to feel better soon

With love and good wishes - Sally



Intercessions 16 February 2025 - by Jenny

In our Thursday evening group we've been looking at Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. This week we read chapter 12. Verse 2 stood out for me:

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

It made me think about how following Jesus very often means going against the way the rest of the world operates, not getting sucked into the way other people think just because it's easy, not wanting to risk criticism, rejection or being left out.

I want to pick up this theme of being counter-cultural by reading a set of affirmations written by Christians in South Africa: I've chosen it because it illustrates that verse in Romans beautifully and is so relevant to what's going on in the world at the moment. It's full of hope, and of encouragement to push back when we see and hear the untruths and half-truths that are everywhere in our communities and the world.

After each statement we'll have a moment to reflect and pray silently about what we've just heard, perhaps relating it to situations or places that God has put on our hearts.....

It is *not* true that this world and its inhabitants are doomed to die and be lost:

This is true: for God so loved the world that he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him shall not die but have everlasting life.....

It is *not* true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty:

This is true: I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly.....

It is *not* true that violence and hatred shall have the last word and that war and destruction have come to stay for ever.

This is true: for to us a child is born, to us a son is given in whom authority shall rest and whose name will be prince of peace.....

It is *not* true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek to rule the world.

This is true: to me is given authority in heaven and on earth and lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world.....

It is *not* true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the church, before we can do anything.

This is true: I will pour out my spirit on all people, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, and your old folk shall dream dreams.....

It is *not* true that our dreams of liberation of humankind, our dreams of justice, of human dignity, of peace, are not meant for this earth and its history.

This is true: the hour comes, and it is now, that true worshippers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.....

God of truth, love and justice, we acknowledge that so often we get sucked into these untrue ways of thinking. Please will you give us the wisdom to see when that's happening, and the courage to resist and to speak against them, and instead to live in your ways of truth. Save us from feeling like victims, defeated, afraid and helpless. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we can see and live in your good, pleasing and perfect will. Give us the confidence to live in your truth and under your guidance, whatever other people might think of us.

We pray for world leaders, heads of governments, and all others who make decisions that can destroy or build up. Where their attitudes and priorities are not yours, will your Holy Spirit overrule them so that they work not for division and destruction but for the flourishing of all human beings.

Jesus, there are so many parts of the world where things need to change radically, and we ask for your Spirit to inspire their leaders with love, wisdom and courage to change direction: we think of Ukraine, Israel, Gaza and the West Bank and the wider Middle East; Sudan and South Sudan, Nigeria, Myanmar, Pakistan.....,

We pray for ourselves in this church community.....will you draw each of us into a deeper knowledge of you and of your truths, and transform in us what needs to be transformed? Show each of us how we can join with you in making your kingdom come in Golders Green, and in the whole world, as it is in heaven.

We pray for those we know who particularly need to know your love: especially this week Myfanwy and Diana. We'll have a moment of silence in which we can bring to God anyone else we want to pray for, confident that he knows them far better than we do, and that his love for them is beyond our imagining.....

God our provider and healer, we hold before you everyone we've just prayed for. May they know that your loving, healing presence surrounds and accompanies them.

We'll close our prayers using this amazing hymn of praise from Romans chapter 11, which we all got caught up in when we read it at the Thursday evening Bible group.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and^[i] knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!

³⁴ 'Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counsellor?'^[i]

³⁵ 'Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay them?'^[k]

³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things.
To him be the glory for ever! **Amen.**



Indian miniature of the Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus (1570 AD)

Our Favourite Psalms - Jenny

When Sally asked me for my favourite Psalm I panicked, as it's so hard to pick just one out of the 150 and my choice would depend on the mood I'm in and what's on my mind! As I thought about this, Psalm 95 came to mind so I'm offering that as this evening's favourite! ("Oh come let us sing unto the Lord").

We sang it in church every Sunday when I was growing up, and I can still recite it from memory, in the poetry of the Book of Common Prayer! As a child, it was just something to sit through, but now, decades later, I can begin to sense what the psalmist was trying to communicate, in a way that I couldn't when I was six! There's such an exhilaration - 'let us sing for joy to the Lord''shout aloud' 'extol him with music and song' - so much energy. You can picture the congregation dancing, singing their hearts out, caught up in uninhibited praise and thanksgiving.

The psalmist goes on to remind us that the whole of Creation is God's, because he made it: the depths of the earth....the mountain peaks... the sea ...the dry land. That puts us humans in our place - we're *part of* a much bigger Creation, 'the flock under his care' and all we can do is bow down and worship. With that knowledge, how can we possibly 'harden our hearts' and rebel - and yet we do!!!

To me, it's the excitement and exuberance that draw me into this psalm, the joy and the sense of the awesome care that God has for every part of his creation, and his commitment to us even when we (meaning 'I') mess up! Do read it and see what you think!



Psalms - Your Choice so far

On Saturday 15th February, Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, came to St Martins-in-the-Fields to talk to those of us who are members and companions of the Nazareth Community. He has agreed to be our guide for the Community and meet with us once a year to see how we are progressing. He talked on prayer and, as you can imagine, it was a very profound and wise talk. At the beginning he emphasized the importance of Psalms as a means of praying, His words were, "In the Western tradition of prayer, the Benedictine spirituality and monastic life, with its regular recitation of psalms of prayer, remind us of the full range of the human experience—joy and celebration, as well as feeling lost or self-absorbed". He encouraged us to do the same with psalms and recognise all the emotions and feelings they bring to us in the many fluctuations of our moods and experiences. And this is so true. It is, as Jenny says in her piece, difficult to say which is actually our favourite one as we often change our minds depending on how a particular one speaks to us at the time we hear it or how we are feeling, or can actually change our mood by its joyousness, as psalm 150 does, in its recognition of all the good things we have in creation.

Perhaps our Lenten practice could be focusing on a psalm we have chosen or, on one someone else has chosen, and there are so many more. We could meditate on it to see how we feel. Does it speak for and to us? Does it make a difference? Praying like this connects us to the writers of the psalms of so many decades ago and those who have prayed them down the ages. So far these are the psalms you have identified as important to you. There is quite range of feelings and emotions. Thank you so much to those of you who have shared what you really like, although, as you have said, it is very hard to choose! Please do contribute others that come into your minds.

Psalm 96:

Oh come let us sing
unto the Lord

Psalm 121:

I will lift up my eyes to
the Hills from whence
cometh my help

Psalms 51:

Be merciful to me
oh God because of
your constant love

Psalm 27:

The Lord is my light and
my salvation I will fear
no-one

Psalm 122:

I was glad when he said
to me let us go into the
house of the lord

Psalm 91:

you are my
defender and
my protector

Psalm 22:

My God, my God, why
have you forsaken me?

Psalm 13:

How long, LORD? Will you
forget me forever? How long
will you hide your face from
me?

Psalm 36:

I have a
message from
God in my heart

Psalm 24:

The world and all that
is in it belongs to the
God of Earth

Psalm 23:

The Lord is my
Shepherd I shall
not want.

Psalm 139,

You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me. You know
when I sit and when I rise; you
perceive my thoughts from afar

What is love?



February reflections from Paula Gooder

'I want to know what love is', declares the 1984 hit by the rock band Foreigner. I suspect they would have been somewhat taken aback if it had been suggested to them that they should read the book of Leviticus to find out. Indeed, you may be equally surprised by this suggestion but it is, in fact, a very good place to begin.

Leviticus 19.18 contains the famous verse 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' which eventually became part of the summary of the Law, found in Matthew 22.37; Mark 12.30 and Luke 10.27: 'You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself;. But how, you might be tempted to ask, am I meant

to do that? What if I don't feel particularly loving towards them? What if they are altogether irritating and difficult to love?

The answer provided by Leviticus, and indeed many other parts of the biblical tradition, is that love is not so much a feeling as an action. Something you do, rather than an emotion. The love that is described throughout the Bible is focussed around how we behave towards those around us. The rest of Leviticus 19 describes what 'loving your neighbour' looks like. It is done when people do not defraud others or steal (v.13); when they are not unjust or give special treatment either to the poor or the powerful (v.15), when they do not take vengeance or bear a grudge (v.18). That's what love looks like.

This of course begs the question of who counts as a neighbour – the very question the lawyer asked Jesus in Luke 10 before Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan – to which of course the answer is those who are like us and those who are not; people we live near to and those we rarely meet; old friends as well as old enemies.

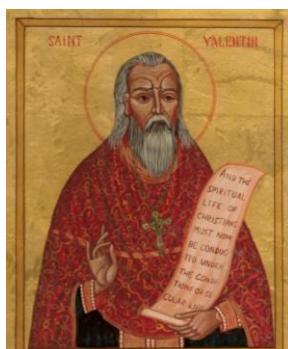
'What is love?' Love is acting towards others with compassion, justice and kindness, exactly as we would like to be treated ourselves and whether we feel like it or not. Love is not at all complicated as an idea – and is the most difficult thing we will ever be asked to do.

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral and a leading Biblical scholar as well as the author of numerous academic and popular theology books.

A Sonnet for St. Valentine - Malcolm Guite

Why should this martyr be the saint of Love?

"Here is a sonnet I composed in honour of the original St. Valentine. I notice some imply that as an early Christian martyr he has nothing to do with Romantic Love and should be dissociated from it. I believe that on the contrary there is every reason why he should be the patron saint of Love. This sonnet explores why".



St Valentine

Why should this martyr be the saint of love?

A quiet man of unexpected courage,

A celibate who celebrated marriage,

An ageing priest with nothing left to prove,

He loved the young and made their plight his cause.

He called for fruitfulness, not waste in wars,

He found a sure foundation, stood his ground,

And gave his life to guard the love he'd found.
 Why should this martyr be our Valentine?
 Perhaps because he kept his covenant,
 Perhaps because, with prayer still resonant,
 He pledged the Bridegroom's love in holy wine,
 Perhaps because the echo of his name
 Can kindle love again to living flame.



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 very unwell and waiting to hear if she has to go back to hospital. She is being well looked after by Florence her carer. We all send her our love. Pray for Diana Turvie, who is still unwell from a stomach ailment. She had a scan at the the Royal Free this week, and she waits for the results. We pray for Anita Houghton, Tony Nwanodi, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada, and Sheila Grodzinsky.

We send our sympathy to Connie, whose older sister, Dorothy, died in Lagos last week. We keep her and her family in our prayers.

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

Feb - Mar 2025

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
23/02/25	Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40	Andrew	Jenny	Bilan	Sally/Simon	Daniel	Tim	Jenny
Bring & Share	1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50	Sim						
	Luke 6:27-38							
02/03/25	Psalms 99	Sam	Kai	Naila	Tim/Naila	Oneyka	TBC	
	2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2	Sohail						
	John 2:1-11							
05/03/25 Ash Wed	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Keith	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC		
	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21							
09/03/25	Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16	Elizabeth	Alexis	Nora	Daniel/Ezim	Ruth	Synthia	
	Romans 10:8b-13	Dozie						
	Luke 4:1-13							
16/03/25	Psalms 27	Guy	Simon	Rose Dean/ Veronica	Ifeyinwe/O nyeka	Onyeka	Shaniv	
	Philippians 3:17-4:1	Keith						
	Luke 13:31-35							
23/03/25	Psalms 63:1-8	Khan	Rose	Silvia	Nehar/ Nwadi	Shaniv	Chinwe	Nehar
	1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Cynthia						
	Luke 13:1-9							
30/03/25	Psalms 32	Poppy	Tony	Cynthia/C hinwe	Nehar/ Nwadi	Dozie	Chinwe	
	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	Daniel						
	Luke 5:1-3, 11b-32							