

NEWSLETTER

27th March 2025



*The Valasse Cross
Story below*

Dear Everyone

Lent: Old Testament Week 3: This Sunday, the focus was, as ever, remembering **Creation, Redemption and Restoration**, the three key areas of the bible that bring us towards Jesus and the Grace given by God that saves us. The focus was on the book of Exodus, showing how God worked through Moses and his leadership, his fight with Pharaoh, the rescue of the Israelites after Passover, into the desert. It showed their discontent with Moses's leadership because they felt stranded, hungry and without shelter. How Moses went up into the mountain to receive the 10 commandments that were to be their Covenant. While he was there the disconsolate Israelites deceived by listening to speakers among them, offering them false promises, built a golden calf and worshipped it thinking this would save them. While Moses must have been very angry at the behavior of the crowds, God showed mercy and forgave them, **Exodus 34: 6-19**, God revealed his character to Moses, proclaiming himself as **compassionate, gracious and slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness**". God showed how Moses was a vehicle for his Grace. The story and the journey goes on. It is a fascinating read with the Israelites showing all the characteristics of crowds today with their impatience, hostility being duped by persuasive speakers and turning away from their leader who is trying to help them – but- eventually coming back. Reading this story over again, we can see it is a contemporary one that is for us now.

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: Naila sang psalm 20 in Urdu during Communion. It was so calming as well as plaintive and apt for our time, as so many of the psalms are; "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble..." .

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. Every day Psalm 139 has more and more meaning for me. Have you a special one that is particularly meaningful for you?

Birthdays and New Year Greetings: Happy Birthday to Geoffrey, whose birthday was a special one. In celebrating his birthday with song and prayers, we thanked him for all the music he has played for us over the years that has enhanced our worship. We also sung Happy Birthday to Nwando, who has just returned to us after some time in Nigeria. We are so pleased she is back, especially for her birthday. We did enjoy both cakes!



Happy Newroz (New Year) to our Iranian church family members who celebrated the Iranian New Year during the week. Many greetings were sent to them from us via WhatsApp wishing them all many blessings, peace and well-being. Parisima and Emad, told us about the celebrations that took place on the day and brought us cakes and tea which we enjoyed after the service on Sunday. Thank you.



Sunday School: sang so joyfully, and with enthusiasm, the song. “Read your bible every day, Pray every day, if you want to grow”, which lifted everyone’s spirits. They have taken to joining in with the last hymn too which adds body to it with lots of clapping and percussion, so we end the service with a sense of joy. It will not take long until we have more volunteers for the choir. Congratulations too to Theo, who not only sings so well but was awarded a certificate of achievement by his school for his successful work in phonics and reading.



Mother’s Day Lunch: This will take place on Sunday 30th March after the service. **The men of the church are asked to bring something for the lunch, please note you are not obligated to do so.** Please let us know on What’sApp what you would like to bring. All donations are very welcome as well as always delicious! It is said in some cultures it is a tradition for the men to cook or provide the lunch to serve to the women – sounds rather a good idea!



St Cuthbert: This well-known and popular Saint has his Feast Day on the 20th of March. We remember him with thanksgiving, for his devotion to the environment and animals, especially those of the sea. Below is a reflection on his life by Malcolm Guite who calls him “The great Apostle of the North, in whose honour the Lindesfarne Gospels were made and on whose breast was found the beautiful Gospel of St. John which is our oldest complete book”.

This window in the chancel of St Cuthbert’s Haydon Bridge depicts scenes from the life of St Cuthbert. The glass is by Leonard Evetts.



The Valasse Cross: At the top of our newsletter is a picture of the Valasse Cross (*by courtesy of the Historical Royal Palaces*) that has been described as “a remarkable artefact of medieval craftsmanship”. The cross is currently on display at the Tower of London from March 2025 to January 2026 for anyone who is interested in medieval craft work and has a fascinating story.

Church of England Lent Reflections: Each week during Lent, the Church of England is sending out suggestions for us to **Read** and **Reflect on** with a **Challenge** for us to consider. This week 3 is below.

Archbishop of York calls for prayer and solidarity with Ukraine: The Archbishop’s comments for you to read are printed below.

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 3rd. 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



Archbishop of York calls for prayer and solidarity with Ukraine

05/03/2025

The Archbishop of York has assured the people and churches of Ukraine of the prayers and solidarity of the Church of England this Lent.

Calling for a just and lasting peace that protects the sovereignty, security and freedom of Ukraine and its people, the Archbishop affirmed the role of Ukraine's churches in striving for peace.

The Archbishop also called for prayer for the Church of England **Diocese in Europe**, which includes Ukraine and Russia.

This is the Archbishop's statement in full:

"As we enter the season of Lent, I want to assure the people and churches of Ukraine of the ongoing prayers and solidarity of the Church of England. At this time of great political uncertainty and change, we stand with them in their call for a just and lasting peace that provides for the sovereignty, security and freedom of Ukraine and its people.

"Even in times of war, it is the role of the Church to be a peacemaker. We understand that peace is not the mere absence of war, but the presence of justice and the conditions for human flourishing. Europe's painful and bloody history has shown that for a peace to be just, it needs to address the reasons leading to war rather than sowing the seeds of the next conflict. It must be negotiated with all relevant countries. For a peace to be lasting it needs to be cultivated and maintained, with the ongoing commitment of all parties.

"The churches of Ukraine have a vital role to play in working for justice and peace, even as they continue to suffer under the full-scale Russian invasion, and they remain in our prayers each day. Meanwhile churches in the UK and across Europe continue to provide support and hospitality to thousands of Ukrainian refugees. Please pray too for the Church of England Diocese in Europe, which includes Ukraine and Russia, and its ministry of caring for Ukrainian refugees and all those affected by this devastating war.

"We also continue to pray for world leaders as they try to bring this war in Ukraine to an end and negotiate a pathway to peace. Help them, O Lord, to affirm our common humanity by recommitting to the rules laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. May their efforts contribute to a fairer, more just and more peaceful Europe and world."

The Bishop of Europe's Lent appeal 2025 supports projects supporting refugees from Ukraine and across Europe in partnership with USPG: Lent Ukraine 2025

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

St Cuthbert – A Reflection by Malcolm Guite



“Indeed, I was inspired to write a sonnet about the experience of standing in front of Cuthbert’s copy of St. John. Cuthbert, or ‘Cuddy’ as he is known affectionately in the North, was a man whose whole life was shaped and lived in and by the Gospel, by reconciliation, by good news for the poor and supremely by that free movement of the Holy spirit, flowing like water, and like the wind, blowing where it listeth. Though Cuthbert worked tirelessly for the church and for the poor he was at heart a hermit and a mystic, in intimate communion with God in his hermitage on his beloved inner Farne island . I feel a particular connection with Cuthbert and have walked on pilgrimage along the Cuthbert Way from Melrose Abbey in Scotland to the Holy island of Lindesfarne in Northumberland. Cuddy ‘Cuthbertus’ says the dark stone up in Durham Where I have come on pilgrimage to pray”.

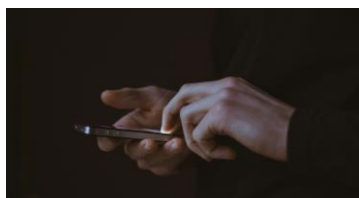
But not this great cathedral,
nor the solemn Weight of Norman masonry
we lay Upon your bones
could hold your soul in prison.
Free as the cuddy ducks they named for you,
Loosed by the lord who died to pay your ransom,
You roam the North just as you used to do;
Always on foot and walking with the poor,
Breaking the bread of angels in your cave,
A sanctuary, a sign, an open door,
You follow Christ through keening wind and wave,
To be and bear with him where all is borne;

The Valasse Cross

“Now showing at the Tower of London The Valasse Cross is a remarkable artefact of medieval craftsmanship, currently on display at the Tower of London from March 2025 to January 2026. This exquisite cross consists of two parts: an outer cross crafted in Normandy during the 1180s, and a smaller, older inner cross associated with Empress Matilda, granddaughter of William the Conqueror, likely made in the 1000s Empress Matilda, after a tumultuous period known as The Anarchy, founded the Valasse Abbey in Normandy, to which the cross was traditionally attributed. The cross contains a relic of the ‘True Cross’, set at the front in wax, reflecting the medieval practice of venerating relics. It may have been used in religious processions or as an altar cross. The cross’s design evokes the general outline of the so-called imperial Lothar Cross in the treasury of Aachen”.

The Valasse Cross is on loan from the Musée des Antiquités (Rouen Métropole Normandie) in France, made possible by the support of The Syder Foundation. Visitors can view this magnificent piece in the Chapel of St John the Evangelist within the White Tower at the Tower of London.

Photo credit: Historic Royal Palaces



Week 3: Together

We are designed for community – to build one another up and to allow ourselves to be built up by others. In this way, God enables us to remain rooted in hope and to become a hopeful presence in our communities.

Prayer for the week

Bind us together, Lord, with cords that cannot be broken. Show us how we can grow in hope by joining with others. Help us, together, to become signs of hope in your world. Amen.

What's togetherness got to do with it?

Reading

1 Corinthians 12.12, 20-26

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Reflection

Imagine you have the latest phone, but no Wi-Fi or working SIM card. You can't make an urgent call because you are not connected. Similarly, a Christian cannot fully function disconnected from a Christian community. Paul uses the analogy of a human body where each member depends on others to thrive. We weren't designed to live in isolation - God created us for togetherness.

The writer Debbie Thomas said, 'we are meant to live lives of profound interdependence, growing into, around, and out of each other...'

In a hurting world, it is easy to become despondent. Joining with others can help us stay rooted in hope. When we can't find the words to pray, others can. When others are struggling, we can pray with and for them. We can remind one another of who God is and of the lasting hope he offers us.

Challenge

What could your community do to nurture a spirit of togetherness?

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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 is 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=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

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
30/03/25 Mothering Sunday Lunch	John 1:29-37	Abi	Nwadi	Cynthia/ Chinwe	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/ Chinwe	Tim/Naila	Onyeka	Chinwe	
27/04/25 Bring & Share	TBC	Elizbeth	Kai	Rose Dean/ Veronica	Ifeyinwe /Onyeka	Shaniv	Tim	