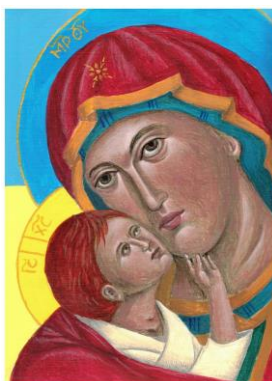


# NEWSLETTER

27<sup>th</sup> February 2025



*St Mary of Kyve*

**Dear Everyone** - Greetings to you all.

Lent is nearly upon us. A season of preparation when we follow Jesus Christ through his trials to the Cross and then, the Joy of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Lent starts on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March (Ash Wednesday) and ends on Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>, commonly known as Holy Thursday. There will be a service in church on Ash Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> March starting at 7.00pm

Golders Green Parish Church  
All are Welcome



**ASH  
WEDNESDAY**

5 March at 7 pm

Holy Communion with  
Imposition of Ashes



**Birthday Greetings:** This week it was the turn of Natasha, joined with her lovely sons, to celebrate her birthday with us. It was so good to see the boys with her, to sing Happy Birthday and for Kamran to say a prayer for her. Natasha faithfully brings both boys every week who contribute so much to Sunday School.



**Sunday School Joy:** Towards the end of the Service, the Sunday School young people sang, with such feeling, Psalm 23, "The Lords my Shepherd". They have strong, tuneful voices that moved us all a great deal. It was one of those moments that stayed with me afterwards hearing their confidence and tuneful singing. Thank you to them all.



**Please pray for Diana, Keith, Sheila and Myfanwy:** You may know by now that Diana, Keith and Sheila are all in the Royal Free Hospital. Diana is having an investigatory procedure as she has been unwell for some time. Keith is seeing his heart specialist early this week and Sheila is having investigations to ease her symptoms. Kamran and I visited them on Sunday afternoon to see how they were, to give them everyone's good wishes, to have a chat and say a prayer with them. We told them how missed they are and hope, very much, they will make a good recovery. They were being well looked after by the staff at the Royal Free. How lovely to see Sacha who was with his mother, Sheila. It is ages since I have seen him, possibly since he was a very young boy in church. Both he and Natasha spend time sitting with Sheila, giving her love, care and I don't doubt much encouragement. Myfanwy is at home being cared for by Florence. She is unwell but keeping positive.

**The Upside Down World:** Jenny preached a fine sermon on the nature of the world and how far it is from the intention of God. She emphasized the Biblical message, the counter-cultural teaching of Jesus with his preaching of the Beatitudes which today, as in the past, show how the world's values are radically different from God's values, and our need to change. Her sermon is in full below. Thinking of how the world is at this present moment, with its threat of more war, starvation and leaders who are more interested in feeding their egos than governing in the best interest of people, her sermon was very apt. All we can do, like the voice of the psalmist in Psalm 77, is to cry out to God for help. cry out to God to hear our prayer and pray that things will change.

**Psalm 77:** I cried out to  
God for help, I cried out to  
God to hear me.....

**Psalms for Lent:** Thank you to those of you who shared the psalms that especially speak to you. There is a strong measure of agreement between you. Several of you said, how you feel about a particular psalm depended upon how you felt at the time, which is exactly what the psalms do - speak to all feeling - whether of joy, depression,

anger, hope, love and more; the psalmists just said it as they felt it in the contexts in which they found themselves. I have left the psalms you chose as they were shown last week, with a couple more added **in green**. How might you make use of them in your Lent practice; perhaps choose one to read in depth and meditate on each day, or select ones that show the different feelings you have. As Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, said about them, "The 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-absorption". He encouraged us to do the same with psalms and recognize all the emotions and feelings they bring to us in the many fluctuations of our moods and experiences.

**The Ordering of Love- Reflections from Paula Gooder:** what an interesting reflection Paula has given us this week, focusing on a spat between J.D. Vance, the Vice-President of the USA, in an interview on Fox News, and others when he cited a 'Christian tradition' of the "Ordering of Love". Shae asks us, "Who is right". Do read it and see what you think. It certainly is something to mull over.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM):** Please note that the date for the APCM is **Sunday 11th 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](mailto: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 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2.30-4.00pm:** Please come to the afternoon tea that is taking place at **Magnolia Court, Care Home**, full address below on the invitation to us all. Tell your friends about it as there may be areas of information they are interested in. Do come. It sounds interesting, informative and fun! The invitation is from, Jeyda Korusoy, Prevention and Wellbeing Coordinator (Childs Hill, East Finchley and Hampstead Garden Suburb) Communities, Adults & Health Directorate.



## Community Meeting with Afternoon Tea

<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> March</b>  <b>2:30-4pm</b>  <b>Magnolia Court</b>  <b>Care Home</b>  <b>181 Granville</b>  <b>Road</b>  <b>NW2 2LH</b></p>	<p>Join us for a chat, advice and information with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prevention and Wellbeing</b></li> <li>• <b>Barnet Carer's Centre</b></li> <li>• <b>Age UK</b></li> <li>• <b>Social Prescriber</b></li> <li>• <b>Five Bells Computer Club</b></li> </ul>	<p>There will be  live music  and afternoon  tea!</p>
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Adult Social Care

**World Day of Prayer:** This takes place on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March** at **St Edward the Confessors Church, Finchley Road** at **2.00pm**. The service this year has been created by "The Women of the Cook Islands". Looking forward to seeing you and joining with others from our local churches.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025

Friday 7 March

A service for everyone!

St Edward the Confessor

Finchley Road, NW11

(corner of Hoop Lane)

Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

2pm

Refreshments served  
after the service

Cook Islands *I made you wonderful*

INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION  
[www.wdp.org.uk](http://www.wdp.org.uk) Registered Charity Number: 1040000

**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 March 6th. We spend time discussing what really speaks to us. So far we have reached chapter 13.

**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.

**With love and good wishes - Sally**



### **Sermon 23 February 2025 - Jenny**

Psalm 37: 1-7

1 Corinthians 15: 35-38, 42-50

Luke 6: 27-38

Just for a moment, imagine you're upside down. It'll feel very strange, not natural, as if this isn't the way you were designed to be. Hold that thought and let's pray.

*"Loving God, thank you for the Bible, your inspired word for us. Please will you send your Holy Spirit to guide my words and to inspire the minds of all of us so that we hear what you want us to hear this morning, and then act on it. In the precious name of Jesus - Amen"*

#### **Introduction**

A Christian Aid partner from Honduras once said: *"The whole world is upside down because it puts economics before the human and social needs of people. We need to have different rules".*

It's hard to disagree with that, when you look around the world. There's so much that's not the way God made it or wants it – we could all make our own lists but they would probably include things like conflict, injustice, environmental destruction, greed, selfishness, abuse of power. When we think about that it's absolutely right to feel uncomfortable, that something's not as it was meant to be – that as the Honduran partner said the world is upside down.



I want to explore that idea this morning. The Bible has a lot to say about the upside-downness of the world, though it doesn't actually use that word. Before we look at our Gospel reading it's worth looking at the passage immediately before it: verses 17-26 of chapter 6. This is where Luke records the sayings of Jesus that we call the Beatitudes,

Jesus says: *Blessed are you who are poor, who hunger, who weep, and when people hate you.....*

He goes on to say: *But woe to you who are rich, well-fed, who laugh, and whom everybody thinks are successful....."*

None of that would have made much sense to the disciples or to the crowd listening to Jesus, and it still sounds weird and unrealistic today. It's just not the way things are. This is not a sermon on the Beatitudes - there's no limit to the number of sermons that have been and will be preached on them - but the key point from them for today is that the world's values are radically different from God's values, and need to change.

That's the background. The 'upside down' theme continues in this morning's Gospel reading. Jesus builds on the Beatitudes by saying more things that are hard to get our heads around: *'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you..... If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, give them your shirt as well. ....Pray for them..... Do to others as you would have them do to you.*

All of that is completely counter-cultural, totally not the way life works. But that's what Jesus says. It's not 'would you mind doing some of this when you feel like it, please?'. He's really clear, these are instructions, not optional extras. And they're hard.

But that's the deal. As followers of Jesus we're called to help bring in God's kingdom by living according to God's values, not those of the world. That means having the courage to live differently, showing how the world is the wrong way up and what the alternative looks like.

If we live that way we'll be showing people what God is really like, and that's the greatest gift we can ever give. There's so much misinformation about God, portraying him as stern, angry, judgemental and determined to spoil our fun. But the God Jesus is pointing to is the opposite – outrageously generous, astonishingly merciful, overwhelmingly and unconditionally loving. We see in verses 35-36 that God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. And that we should be merciful, just as God is merciful. If that's what God is like, Jesus is saying, that's what we should be like too. And people will notice how we live and will want to know why. And so we help bring God's kingdom closer.

In many parts of the world, including most of the global north, our cultures and economies are based on the individual: 'I look after me.....everyone else can look after themselves, they're not my problem..... there's no such thing as society'. This is so upside down compared with the kingdom of God.

I gave a talk for Christian Aid at a church a few years ago when there were those huge movements of desperate refugees coming into Europe. I described the amazing work our partners were doing to help them. The first question I was asked at the end was: why should we bother with them, we have enough problems here? This church was in a very wealthy area, and thinking about it, their response was totally in tune with our culture of individualism. But it needs challenging. Yes, of course we should care for people who need help in this country, and their needs are massive – but why should we stop there? God's kingdom doesn't.

By contrast, before I worked for Christian Aid I volunteered on a health project in Zimbabwe. I stayed one night in a remote village and that evening the women served me a chicken stew. Later, I discovered that it was their annual chicken. They were so poor that they could only eat meat on very special occasions. Nearly thirty years later I'm still overwhelmed by their generosity – and I'm humbled by it as well. How do I use what I have, which is infinitely more than those women could even dream of? Do I get anywhere near their

level of generosity? Do I even want to, or am I so deep into our culture of 'me' that my instinct is, like the people at that rich church, to hold onto everything I can, just in case.....

The question to me, and to the rest of us, is how do I, how do we, respond to what Jesus is saying, and live the right way up, according to God's values? Loving our enemies, people we really don't get on with, and doing good to them, won't be easy and will look different for each of us. We might have difficult family relationships to deal with, or maybe there are work colleagues or people in our social groups who stress us, or people we try to avoid because we disagree so strongly on something important to us such as politics or religion, or whose values and behaviour make us angry. If we really want to we can turn our human instincts the right way up again and find ways to love them and do good to them. That won't necessarily mean turning the other cheek, or handing over your shirt as well as your coat. It might be as simple as sending a birthday card, asking them how their weekend was, making them a coffee, and certainly praying for them. The Holy Spirit is very good at helping with that sort of thing, we just have to ask.

But even so, sometimes it all seems just too hard. It's worth looking at the words from Psalm 37 that Andrew read for us. God is saying, *don't fret about people who live wrong-way-up values and seem to get away with it. Instead, trust me, delight in me, and everything will work out in the end.* That really is counter-cultural, it's such a very different way of thinking from the usual. But that's what we're asked to do, and that's what the kingdom of God is about.

We see the same theme everywhere we look in the Gospels, in fact everywhere we look in the Bible. One great example is the story of the good Samaritan in Luke chapter 10: it forces us to ask ourselves who our neighbour is, and insists on the answer that it could be anyone, whether they're like us or whether we even know them, let alone get on with them. The Samaritan in that story was literally loving his enemy and doing good to someone who hated him.

All of this takes us back to where we started, with the Christian Aid partner in Honduras. The world is indeed upside down, nothing like the kingdom of heaven. It's up to us as followers of Jesus to live differently, loving our enemies, doing good to those who hate us, and so helping turn the world the right way up again.

Let's close with a prayer

Lord Jesus, nobody said that following you would be easy. We know the world is nowhere near how you created it to be, and that it needs to be turned the right way up again. Please will you show each of us how you want us to live so that other people see what you're like. Give us the courage and discernment to live differently. Will you pour out your Holy Spirit on each of us, now and in our daily lives, so that your kingdom may come wherever we are, as it is in heaven.

May you be glorified - Amen



## Psalms - Your Choice so far

Thank you so much to those of you who have shared the psalm that is memorable to you.  
Please do contribute others that come into your mind. There are so many more. Two new ones in green.

### I wonder:

How does the psalm you choose make you feel?

How does it speak for and to us?

Does it make a difference?

Do we feel connected to the psalmists?

Do we feel an empathy with other cultures and countries and their situations?

### Psalm 71:

In you, O Lord I put my trust,  
Let me never be put to  
shame.....be my strong refuge

### 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 96:

Oh come let us sing  
unto the Lord

### 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 23:

The Lord is my  
Shepherd I shall  
not want.

### Psalm 36:

I have a  
message from  
God in my heart

### Psalm 91:

you are my  
defender and  
my protector



**Psalm 22:**

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

**Psalm 24:**

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

**Psalm 13:**

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

**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

**Psalm 150:**

Praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in his  
mighty Heavens.....Let everything that has  
breath praise the Lord...



*Depiction of the Last Supper by an unknown artist  
possibly Ethiopian*

**The Ordering of Love**  
February reflections from Paula Gooder



A spat broke out recently on social media. This is nothing unusual. Social media exists, it appears, to foment spats. What was unusual was what the spat was about. J.D. Vance, the Vice-President of the USA, in an interview on Fox News, cited a 'Christian tradition' which he maintained meant that we should order who we love: focussing first on family, then on your neighbour, then community, then your fellow citizens and finally the rest of the world.

It is an idea found in the writings of Greek philosophers such as Aristotle, as well as in that of Christian theologians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, where it is known by its Latin name *ordo amoris*, or the ordering of love. Many people argued against it and so blew up the most unlikely of occurrences on social media – a heated debate about the proper interpretation of Thomas Aquinas' theology.

On the one side were those who supported Vance's reading and argued that proper love should be ordered in concentric circles with self and family first, and those not from your country last; on the other side were those who cited the parables of the Good Samaritan and sheep and the goats and Jesus' own dismantling of family in the Gospels (declaring his followers to be his mother, brothers and sisters).

### **So who was right?**

As is often the case, there is truth on both sides. Aquinas' point is an important one. If we say we love everyone in the whole world equally, it doesn't mean anything. We cannot love absolutely everyone in the same way, so focussing the command to love onto particular people takes the command to love more seriously. At the same time, Aquinas needs to be read in the light of the teaching of Jesus, which demands that we take care of the poor and outcast and treat our enemies as neighbours.

This brings us back to the *ordo amoris*. The first requirement in the ordering of love is that we love God. From that flows all loving. The very point of love is that it knows no end or limit. We do, indeed, practise it among those closest to us but then it must spread far and wide. It isn't that 'non-citizens' get the scrappy crumbs left over at the end of love. A love focussed on God is boundless and excludes no one. But it is focussed on actual people and is not a bland sentiment that means nothing in practice.

Sometimes, just sometimes, social media spats shine a light on something really important and this, I think, was one of those times.



## 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 in hospital and for Keith who is also in hospital. 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=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](http://www.gg-pc.co.uk)

## Feb - Mar 2025

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
02/03/25	Psalms 99	Sam	Kai	Naila	Tim/Naila	Oneyka	TBC	
	2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2	Sohail						
	Luke 9:28-36							
05/03/25 <b>Ash Wed</b>	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	Onyek a	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							