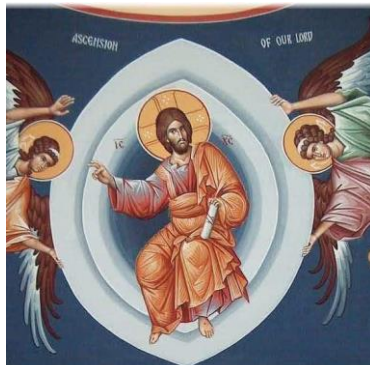


NEWSLETTER

23rd May 2025



Dear Everyone - Greetings.

Continuation of the OT Story: Who is your Goliath of Today?? This week we covered the story of the two books of Samuel. These took us through the stories of Samuel, Saul to David, relating the Israelites inevitable wars, disobedience, forgiveness by God and then repeating the cycle. In book 1 the story focuses on Hannah who longs for child, as do a number of women in the Bible. She eventually gives birth to Samuel and dedicates him to God's service. By then the Israelites have moved from their rule by Judges to their wish for a strong King. The book sets the scene for the coming of Jesus by highlighting the need for a king of justice and righteousness, but not the kind of king they initially get in Saul and David. In spite of warnings from Samuel who is a prophet, Saul is appointed, who at first, is successful but then shows deep flaws because of his disobedience and faces a downfall. David, a humble shepherd boy, who trusts in God, offers himself as a fighter against Goliath who he overcomes and kills. Because of his faith in overcoming Goliath he is admired by the people, he becomes King after Saul's death. Initially David is trusting in God, he is successful with many military successes. He makes Jerusalem a political and a religious capital, moving the Arc of the covenant there. God promises a dynasty to David from whom will come the future Messiah (2 Samuel 7:12-16) that the people long for. But the inevitable happens and David, going against God, makes many mistakes, giving in to his desires; his sons also. David and his family fall apart. One thing about the stories in the OT they do not stint in describing the dreadful acts of immorality and bloodshed against women and men, which inevitably brings David and his family down. David goes through many periods of remorse in his vulnerability but comes to a sad end. But, God still keeps his promise of a Saviour/King through David's line. A king who keeps his promises and rules with faithfulness. One thing about David, is his self-belief that he can fight what seems an overpowering action and win, when others do not believe in him.

In his sermon Kamran asked us, "Who are our Goliaths of today in our own lives?". "How can we overcome them with the determination of a David?". It's worth thinking about that and what our determination and skills are we have to overcome them.

Feedback: At the side table of the church, Kamran has left some feedback forms so you can give your views on how you feel about the videos of the OT series. He would be grateful if you could fill them in giving your opinions. You do not have to put your name on them; they can be very short or longer - just say what you think. Many thanks.

A Sonnet for Ascension Day: Malcolm Guite write a sonnet for Ascension day which he describes as, “The glorious finale of the Easter Season. In the mystery of the Ascension we reflect on the way in which, one sense Christ ‘leaves’ us and is taken away into Heaven, but in another sense he is given to us and to the world in a new and more universal way”. His sonnet can be read below.

Sheila’s Funeral:



It was so good to see the numbers who attended Sheila’s funeral on Tuesday, to express their love for her and sympathy for her family. It was a fitting event for someone who did so much for the church and wider society; who will be missed. Numbers attended from our church family, those who had contact with her as friends and from a wide range of organisations. Love and condolences were given to her family, Peter, Sacha, Natasha and her grandchildren. During the service Sacha gave a moving Eulogy for his mother with a poem, “My Mother Kept a Garden”. Her favourite hymns were sung and prayers said. A reception was held afterwards to which everyone gathered and had the opportunity to talk with each other and recall many stories of Sheila’s full and fruitful life – a life well lived. Thank you to those who came.



Wednesday Morning Coffee: As usual our coffee morning is 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: The date of this next session will be on Thursday 5 June at 6.30pm.

Toddler Group: The Toddler group is going well. If anyone would like to help our volunteers, please talk to Kamran or Ifey. Thank you for those who help with it; the support you give is much appreciated.

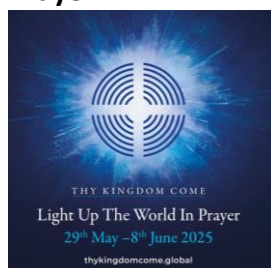
Day Outing to St Alban's: Please sign up for the Annual Pilgrimage to St Albans Cathedral. This will take place on Saturday 21st June. **Kamran and Tracey need to know by 8th june for a place** to be booked. Wev do need to know the numbers coming, as if there are quite a few of us, a coach can be organized. There is a signing up sheet on the far table of the church for you to enter your name.



Ascension Day: The Service will take place at **6.30pm on this Thursday 29th May**. It will be in the form of singing praises as the disciples sung together after Jesus ascended. The hymns you have requested will be included in it. There is a paper on the table at the side of the church for you to put down your favourite hymns/songs to be incorporated into the Service.

Annual Joint Service and Barbecue: On **20th July at 10.00am** there will be a service with our Asian Congregation of friends followed by the annual barbecue in the vicarage garden at 11 00am. This is always such an enjoyable event and great fun. Please put the date in your diaries and come along. Let us hope the sun shines and the rain stays away!

Thy Kingdom Come - Light up the world in Prayer:



This initiative is a global prayer movement that originated with the Church of England and encourages those who join in to deepen their own faith, pray for loved ones and seek the Holy Spirits power for effective

witness. It was inspired by the disciples prayerful waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after Jesus' Ascension. We are asked to pray especially during the week of 29th May – 8th June, to join in globally with all others who are praying together. Considering the sorry and sad state of the world, we need as many prayers as we can offer especially for peace.

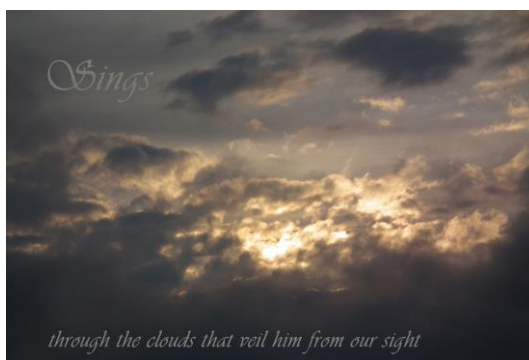
“Almighty God our heavenly Father,
guide the nations of the world into the way of justice and truth,
Establish among us together,
that peace which is the fruit of righteousness,
that we may become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen”.



They shall beat their swords into ploughshares: A second reflection sent by St Paul's Cathedral by army chaplain Adèle Rees, who describes her role as being fundamentally a peace keeper. See below.

With love and many good wishes – Sally

A Sonnet for Ascension Day – Malcolm Guite



Malcolm Guite writes, “This is the glorious finale of the Easter Season. In the mystery of the Ascension we reflect on the way in which, one sense Christ ‘leaves’ us and is taken away into Heaven, but in another sense he is given to us and to the world in a new and more universal way. He is no longer located only in one physical space to the exclusion of all others. He is in the Heaven which is at the heart of all things now and is universally accessible to all who call upon Him. And, since His humanity is taken into Heaven, our humanity belongs there too, and is in a sense already there with him. “For you have died”, says St. Paul “, and your life is hidden with Christ in God”. In the Ascension Christ’s glory is at once revealed and concealed, and so is ours. The sonnet form seemed to me one way to begin to tease these things out. We saw his light break through the cloud of glory Whilst we were rooted still in time and place As earth became a part of Heaven’s story And heaven opened to his human face.

Ascension Day

We saw him go and yet we were not parted
He took us with him to the heart of things
The heart that broke for all the broken-hearted
Is whole and Heaven-centred now, and sings,
Sings in the strength that rises out of weakness,
Sings through the clouds that veil him from our sight,
Whilst we ourselves become his clouds of witness
And sing the waning darkness into light,
His light in us, and ours in him concealed,
Which all creation waits to see revealed.

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares

Reflections from Adèle Rees



The reality of military life is that we spend most of our time and energy doing everything we can to avoid having to apply lethal force (another armyism). We are fundamentally, and frustratingly for those who join to fight, peacekeepers.

As Chaplains we do not, and would not want to, bear arms. We share in the work of a military that is committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that warfare is always the path of last resort. Those sharp edged swords make for surprisingly effective ploughshares...

At home that might look like supporting the NHS to deliver COVID vaccinations, or driving trucks during strikes. Overseas that might be 'show of force' exercises like the recent Steadfast Dart with our NATO partners, or enduring deployments in Estonia to remind our enemies that we are ready and able. It might also be keeping the peace, as we try to do in places like Mali.

'Peace' sounds like it should be simple, after all, it's just about being nice and getting on with people, right? Yet it is not simple. I can only speak for myself but my life has not been entirely peaceful. I don't go looking for disagreements, I don't imagine many of us do, but still I find myself tripping over them. Sometimes it's a personality clash, or a thoughtless action, other times it is about ideas or behaviours that I just can't agree with. Fortunately the Bible is full of other people who failed to live in peace to remind me that it is not so straightforward.

I think there are two types of peace that we are to enact. Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping. The first of these creates the environment for peace, what we might consider the 'soft skills' of diplomacy: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called 'Children of God'. This is the work of people of

faith, for God desires that we live in peace. The second is about maintaining boundaries: 'how beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those... who proclaim peace'.

Peacekeeping requires teeth, leverage, power. As unsavoury as that may sound. Without those feet on the mountains, boots on the ground in army speak, who will maintain the boundaries of peace? Peacekeeping is no easy gig either. Precisely because it is not diplomacy, not negotiation, peacekeepers cannot intervene, they can only hold the line and maintain the limits of peace. Sometimes that means our people can only look on when they encounter different social norms, they can hold the line but not cross it. The Moral Injury of warfare is present in peacekeeping also. There will come a day when the lion will lie down with the lamb, when we will need neither peacemakers or peacekeepers, until then my calling will be to care for those whose service can be as costly in peace as it is at war.



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 remember and pray for Sheila Grodzinsky's husband, Peter, and her children Sacha and Natasha and her grandchildren. May she rest in peace.

Please continue to pray for Keith, and for Myfanwy who is back home from hospital.

We pray for Anita Houghton, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada.

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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0DaDhY2paUT09>

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
04/05/25	Joshua 1:1-6	Sohail	<u>Nwando</u>	Bilan	Nehar/ Nwadi	Daniel	Florence	
11/05/25	Luke 1:67-79	Dozie	Tony	Naila	Daniel/Ezim	Ruth	Synthia	
18/05/25	2 Thessalonians 3:1-4	Keith	Simon	Nora	Nehar/ Nwadi	Onyeka	Chinwe	Alexis
25/05/25	1 Samuel 17: 32-37	Cynthia	Rose	Cynthia/Chinwe	Tim/Naila	Shaniv	Shaniv	
Bring & Share								
01/06/25	1 King 8: 46-51	Abi	Nwadi	Florence	<u>Ifeyinwe/Onyeka</u>	Daniel	Sohail	Jenny
08/06/25	TBC	Guy	Jenny	Christina	Nehar/ Nwadi	Dozie	Ruth	
15/06/25	TBC	Nwennaka	Nehar	Bilan	Daniel/Ezim	Ruth	Tim	Nehar
22/06/25	TBC	Sim	Alexis	Naila	Sally/Tony	Onyeka	Alaiza	
29/06/25	TBC	Andrew	Kai	Cynthia/Chinwe	Tim/Naila	Shaniv	Florence	Alexis
Bring & Share								
06/07/25	TBC	Elizabeth	<u>Nwando</u>	Nora	<u>Ifeyinwe/Onyeka</u>	Daniel	Synthia	
13/07/25	TBC	Sohail	Tony	Bilan	Nehar/ Nwadi	Ruth	Shaniv	Jenny