

NEWSLETTER

15th January 2026



*Our Lady and Child icon
by
Ivanka Demchuk, Lviv*

Dear Everyone - Greeting to you all

Keeping faith in a time of turbulence. In his sermon, Kamran encouraged us to look for signs that the presence of God is manifest. We certainly need to do this in the present day by looking for signs of hope in our lives. If we search, they are there in the little things, the ordinary things, that lift up our hearts. We had examples of this in church on Sunday, with friendship, celebration with and for each other in different ways. We must not discount them Joy does not stop. Many of us, at the end of the day, or whenever we pray, go over what has happened and give thanks for the good things that have uplifted us - however small. We may be overwhelmed and feel impotent by the horrific things we see, experience, feel and hear, and there are so many, but don't let us be blinded by the good personal things that take place and discount them- they all add up in many different ways we may not recognize. In his aptly named book, "Bewilderment", Bishop Robert Atwell says, "Anxiety shrinks us, thanksgiving and serving expands us and makes us bigger". We can (and must) carry on praying, even if we echo in our way of expressing them the words of psalm2:

*"Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the LORD and against his anointed..."*

"In Bewilderment", Bishop Roberts says, "Think of the psalms as having been especially composed for us. What the psalmist is expressing is real for today (as then). They provide a rich vocabulary". He goes on to say that, "we are far too polite to God. We should speak what we feel, not what we think we ought to say". How many of us do that I wonder?

The Magi: Finally, as the Magi showed us, as gentiles, and confirmed what we learnt from our recent studies of the books of the Old Testament, that whoever we are, belong to, or whatever Tribe, Culture or Race, God, through Jesus, is for all people and is there for the whole world. That gives us Hope.

Naila during communion sung psalm 48 in Urdu. “Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God In his Holy Mountain”. Naila’s singing is always calming and meditative and we thank her for the opportunity to hear her sing.

Good news: In amongst all the depressing news of our times at home and abroad, it is so cheering to hear of good news that uplifts us all and in which we can rejoice.

We celebrated:

Joel’s birthday, the son of Kamran and Naila, with prayers and birthday greetings. Thank you Joel for the delicious cakes which were much enjoyed after the service.



Wonderful news from Ifeynuwe Constance and Andrew who have had a beautiful baby girl, Rosemarie Ifunayan Chukwu Uwaga, born in Nigeria. This news gave us so much pleasure as well as welcoming them back. Rosemary at this moment is still in Lagos but we hope to see her soon and greet her at church. We also celebrated, as we so often do in this church with food, to welcome the birth of the little one. Thank you so much.



Return of Festus: It was so good too, to welcome back Festus, fit and well, and walking without a stick after his successful operation on his knee. He had had to wait so long for the procedure so it was joyous to see him walking up the aisle without his stick, to be greeted and congratulate by everyone. We had really missed him.



At the same time, we remember the sad moments: We remembered during the service, **Marlies** and the sudden and unexpected death of her brother, Dr Joe Ordia, a Neuro Surgeon, in Boston, USA on the 4th January. Marlies had only spoken to her brother on the 1st of January and is in a state of shock at how sudden it was. We all send many thoughts and prayers to her and her family.

We also remembered **Ruth**, on the death of her father in Wales. We think and pray for her mother, for Thomas, Elizabeth and family, especially on Thursday January 15th when his funeral will take place. Ruth's father was a long-term, faithful member of his church who was well known for composing hymns. We will think of them all on the 15th.

Iran: while there does not seem to be a country that is not having wars, disasters and interference from other countries, of one kind or another, we pray at this time for our Iranian family members who are severely anxious about what is happening in Iran. They are living in a state of anxiety not knowing what is happening to their families and friends out there. The only news they seem to get is what they see or hear on the news and daily it gets worse and worse. The protests and the violence are increasing and there seems to be no hope of any peaceful resolution. To those of us who remember the past past revolts it is a case of history repeating itself by a people who want to live their lives in freedom. We pray for them, holding Iran in our hearts, longing for a Just resolution in which people can be free to live their lives without violence.

Listening and Learning, Bible Study: The date of the next session is Thursday January 15th at 6.30pm

Coffee: As usual our coffee morning is from 10.30am-12noon. Do come and join us and enjoy coffee, cake and a chat.

Toddler Group: The Toddler group has resumed after their Christmas holidays.

January's eco-tip from A Rocha - Bird Watch: Please remember **The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch (Friday 23-Sunday 25 January)**. As said last week, this is the world's largest garden wildlife survey in which, last year, nearly 600,000 people took part and over nine million birds were counted. We have lost a staggering 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 60 years. It is more important than ever to get involved in the Birdwatch. If you enjoy bird watching and are willing to take one hour counting the birds you see in one location – your garden, balcony or a local park, please do so. You can submit your findings to the RSPB by downloading a free guide and ID chart to help you identify the birds you spot on the RSPB website. Find out more at: [rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch](https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch). For more practical ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature, sign up to A Rocha UK's Wild Christian email: arochoa.org.uk/wild-christian

Last year we talked a great deal about the seasons of creation and valuing nature; this is one way of doing it.

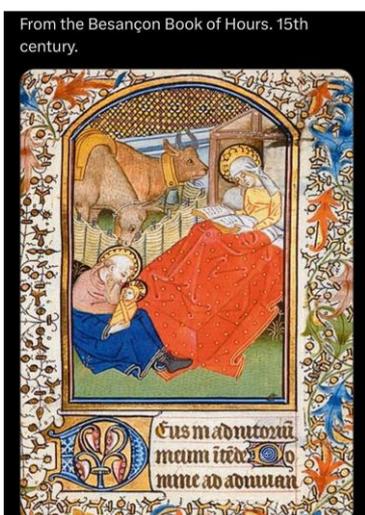


Malcolm Guite Sonnet for Epiphany: Below is Malcolm’s sonnet on Epiphany rejoicing at Christ’s baptism and reminding us of the many little Epiphanies in our lives.

The Silent Saint – Joseph: While Mary gets a great deal of attention, quite rightly, at this time of year, and we rejoice at her “YES” to God, maybe we should also give some thought to Joseph, who some call the “Silent Saint”. Joseph said “YES” to Mary (and God) when he could have cast her aside, as the custom of his time would have expected him to. Joseph is a great role model to men and fatherhood in the way he supported Mary and cared for Jesus, protecting, nurturing and loving them both and yet he doesn’t get much of a mention and fades out in the Gospels. But the medieval artists and iconographers with an eye for the detail of life created some sensitive frescos showing Joseph caring for the baby to give Mary a rest! These artists always show a rich insight into the reality of life, so often with humour, with which we can identify. Below is a short piece about Joseph – The Silent Saint.

With Love and Good Wishes - Sally

JOSEPH THE SILENT SAINT



**13th century medieval manuscript
British Museum**

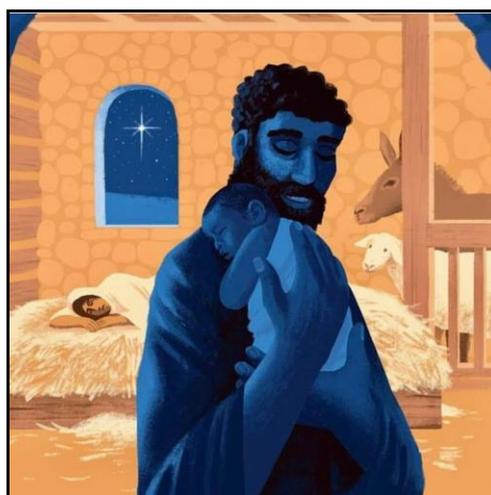


Illustration of St Joseph by Matt Chinworth 21st Century

In both pieces of art, one taken from a 13th century medieval manuscript, the other from a contemporary painting, St Joseph is shown as a tender, attentive father, who rarely, if ever, gets a single line in any nativity

play, shatters all the alpha male stereotypes by devoting himself wholly to his wife's remarkable calling, Both pieces of art in their way show an exhausted Mary sleeping after giving birth and the fatigue mothers feel. What a role model for our time to fathers.

Then, when Mary has her strength back, the mediaeval artists show a feisty Mary of great strength fighting off the Devil. I love the humour and action in medieval art!



13th century manuscript- British Museum

Malcolm Guite - Epiphany



The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings

“The season of Epiphany is an invitation to reflect on the many little ‘epiphanies’, glimpses of how things really are, which are vouchsafed us in the Gospel. Today, the first Sunday of Epiphany is a time to reflect on the moment when ‘the heavens opened’ at Jesus’ Baptism and we were given a glimpse of Father Son and Holy Spirit at the heart of all things. I am grateful to Margot Krebs Neale for the beautiful photograph, taken at the river Jordan which says as much as, if not more than the poem.

This sonnet is a reflection on that mystery. The poem itself is from my collection *Sounding the Seasons*, published by Canterbury Press”.

Beginning here we glimpse the Three-in-one;

The river runs, the clouds are torn apart,
The Father speaks, the Spirit and the Son
Reveal to us the single loving heart
That beats behind the being of all things
And calls and keeps and kindles us to light.

The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings
 'You are beloved, you are my delight!
 In that quick light and life, as water spills
 And streams around the Man like quickening rain,
 The voice that made the universe reveals
 The God in Man who makes it new again.
 He calls us too, to step into that river
 To die and rise and live and love forever.



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.

We were so sad to hear from Ruth that her father died in Wales just before Christmas. We think of Ruth, who is caring for her mother, for Thomas and Elizabeth and send them our love and prayers. His funeral will take place in Wales on Thursday 15th January.

We hold in our prayers, Marlies, whose brother died suddenly on January 4th- a terrible shock to her and her family. We send our condolences.

We give thanks for the recovery of Festus from his knee operation and is walking well.

We pray for Daniel, for Keith, Relia and Myfanwy; for Anita Houghton, Chuba Agbim, for Eunice Adiele, recovering from an eye operation, for Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada. Please keep Kelly's father John in your prayers.

We hold all the above in our hearts that they may be filled with God's healing in their health and, if bereaved healing in their grief.

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

If you would like to advertise on Facebook or Twitter, please information to Tracey via WhatsApp or email Tracey@gg-pc.co.uk

Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0DaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

Contact details: Parish Priest: Rev Kamran Bhatti Office Tel: 020 8455 1873 Website: www.gg-pc.co.uk

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Warden on duty	Service leader	Preacher
18/01/26	Psalm 40:1-4 1 Cor 1:1-9	Andrew Abi	Simon	Alexis	Nehar/ Nwadi	Shaniv	Ifey/ Shaniv	Jenny	Rev Ibezim
25/01/26 Bring & Share	Psalm 27:1,4-9 1 Cor 1:10-18	Nwenna Dozie	Kai	Cynthia /Chinwe	Sally/ Tony	Daniel	Nehar/ Sohail		Rev Kamran
01/02/26	TBC	Keith Sim	Jenny	Alexis	Daniel /Ezim	Dozie	Tony /Bilan	Nehar	
08/02/26	TBC	Dozie Andrew	Nwando	Silvia	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Daniel	Ifey/ Shaniv		
15/02/26	TBC	Sohail Elizabeth	Tony	Bilan	Tim/ Naila	Onyeka	Nehar/ Sohail	Alexis	
22/02/26 Bring & Share	TBC	Cynthia Guy	Nehar	Cynthia /Chinwe	Nehar /Nwadi	Shaniv	Tony/ Bilan		
01/03/26	TBC	Conny Sim	Rose	Christina	Sally /Tony	Ruth	Ifey/ Shaniv	Nehar	
08/03/26	TBC	Andrew Abi	Alexis	Nora	Daniel/ Ezim	Onyeka	Nehar /Sohail		
15/03/26	TBC	Keith Elizabeth	Simon	Naila	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Shaniv	Tony/ Bilan	Jenny	

22/03/26		Sam	Kai	Cynthia /Chinw e	Nehar/ Nwadi	Daniel	Nehar/ Sohail		
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