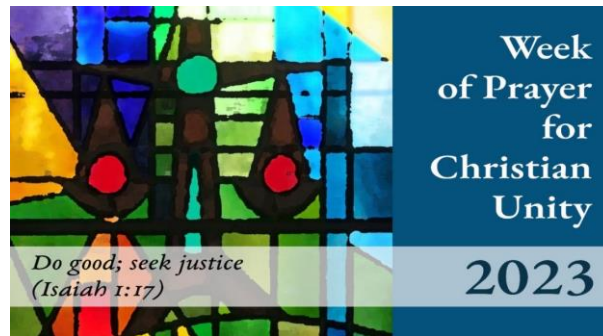


Newsletter 25th January 2023

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Dear Everyone

Greetings to you all at this rather chilly time. Jenny sent a couple of photographs of her walk in Golders Hill Park. The birds may like the ice but I do not think we do - beautiful though it looks. I hope you are all taking care not to slip and to keep as warm as you can



Dorothy – celebration of life – Please note that this will take place during our Sunday service on 12 February 2023 at 10 am. All are welcome to attend, rejoice at her life and support Dorothy's family.

This last week has been the, "**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**", an eight-day period of prayer in which all Christians are invited to participate in response to Christ's prayer "**that they all may be one**" (John 17:21). This takes place each year from January 18-25. The theme of the week is "**Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice**" and there is so much injustice in this country and many others to pray about.

In her intercessions on Sunday Jenny focused on the WPCU theme. She raised essential questions to consider, how we can, in all our differences, work towards a unity that makes people grow and become one. There are no easy answers but the questions are worth considering from where each of us stands. Her intercessions are below, plus a piece on the week and questions about how we deal with the concept of Unity in Church and State which are often do divided.

Palestine's first female Lutheran Pastor - One aspect of Unity, that happened this week, which brought great joy to those of us who are especially involved in Ecumenism, was the appointment of the first female pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Palestine, Ms Sally Azar. She was ordained in Jordan on the 22nd January. In 2006, the Evangelical Church had laid the foundation for this by deciding that women could also be ordained. Being a trustee of the Anglican-Lutheran Society, with contacts in most countries that have Lutheran worshippers, I was thrilled to hear this, especially as a woman had been voted to this position in this particular country. Below is an article giving some biographical details. *(It is worth noting that one successful aspect of a long worked for Unity is, The Porvoo Communion signed in Porvoo, Finland. This is a communion of 15 Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran churches in Europe. established in 1992, by a theological agreement which establishes full communion between and among these churches and an interchange of clergy)*

Night Shelter Project Appeal: Time is getting near to the Night Shelter project which starts on **Tuesday 28th February – 18th April**. Nehar, who is leading this for us is appealing for a volunteer to make breakfast for our guests on Wednesday mornings at 7.00am. This is a menu of cereal, toast, tea and/or coffee – all provided

Contributions to the Newsletter: If anyone would like to contribute anything to the newsletter, please send it to me. It could be a remembrance of things past; of your school or college days; a happening that made you laugh or surprised you; a kind act by a stranger or friends - anything you would like to share and would interest people. If you would rather dictate over the phone, then please do. It is always interesting to hear from you and makes the newsletter truly yours which it was always meant to be when it was started three years ago.













Supporting our community: We continue to support the food bank at All Saints Child's Hill. Thank you so much for your generosity in bringing provisions and making financial donations. You know who you are. We are told that more families than ever are making use of the food bank and people are definitely benefitting.

Coffee mornings: Please join us on Wednesday mornings from 10.30am - 12.30pm for coffee, cake, conversation and a warm place to be. It is very enjoyable. Please spread the word so others know about it.

I do hope you have a good week and take care on our slippery roads.

With much love and many good wishes. Sally

Other Articles and Notices Include;

-  **Intercessions: Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice;**
-  **Unity? Week of Prayer;**
-  **First Female Pastor in Palestine;**
-  **Night Shelter Project – Nehar;**
-  **Food Bank;**
-  **Toddlers Club;**
-  **How We Are;**
-  **Prayers with Kamran;**
-  **Church Bulletin;**
-  **Church Rota;**
-  **Prayer List;**
-  **Links to Service**

Intercessions: Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice – Jenny

*Lord, you called your people from slavery into freedom,
Give us strength and courage to seek out those who are standing in need of justice. Allow us to see this
need and provide help, and through your Holy Spirit gather us into the one fold of Jesus Christ, our
Shepherd. Amen.*

According to Isaiah, God wants Judah not only to practice justice but to embrace the principle of always doing the right thing. God wants us not only to care for orphans and widows but to do what is right and good for them and anyone marginalised by society. The Hebrew word for good is yaw-tab' and it means to be glad, joyful, pleasing, to do well, to make something beautiful.

To be Christian means to be a disciple. All Christians sit under the Word of God, learning together what it is to do good, and who it is that stands in need of this solidarity. As society becomes more indifferent to the needs of others, we, as the children of God, must learn to take up the cause of our oppressed brothers and sisters by speaking truth to power and if necessary, plead their case so that they may live in peace with justice. In doing this we will always do the right thing!

Our commitment to eradicate and to be healed of the sin of racism requires us to be prepared and willing to be in relationship with our Christian sisters and brothers.

Christian Unity

A lawyer asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?” Jesus’ response asks us to see beyond the divisions of religion, tribe and nationality to recognise our neighbour in need. Christians likewise must see beyond these divides and the divisions within the Christian family to recognise and love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Challenge

Who are the marginalised or oppressed in your society? How might churches together walk with these brothers and sisters, respond to their need and speak up on their behalf?

Dear Lord,
We long for real unity in the midst of injustice.
We remember the life of Stephen Lawrence.
We commemorate the 30th anniversary of his death.
Comfort his family and all those who knew and loved him.
We thank you for those in your church who advocate for racial justice.
We pray you will strengthen their resolve.
May their work change attitudes.
Will you raise up a new generation of allies.
May institutions be completely transformed,
So the last will be the first,
The least will receive the most,
The lost may find a place to belong.
Move us from an attitude of tolerance,
To a disposition of embrace.
May we stand against racial injustice.
Stand with those who are marginalised.
Stand as one church for all you stood for.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Question of Unity?? - Sally

I wonder how many of us grapple with the word “Unity” and what it means when, as Kamran said in his sermon, “throughout history Church and State have so often been dis-united”. There is so much consistently mentioned in the Gospels from Jesus and Paul about how we should love and help our neighbours. Paul has the hardest words to those who are divided and quarrelling, “I thank God that I did not baptize any of you” (1Corinthians1-14), “In our Communion Service we say, “Although we are many we are all one” and yet Churches are fractured as well as Countries, the groups within them and us as individuals. But, there have always been large numbers, in hope and optimism, who work to find ways of bringing unity between churches, countries and individuals – the peacemakers, the conciliators - even when things are really grim they persist determinedly.

The week for Christian Unity is one of those constants when, across the Christian world, people pray that we may come together in peace and unity. Each year there is a different theme and there is never a shortage of subjects to choose from. If you could choose a subject, I wonder what it would be?

This year’s theme has been guided by the churches of Minneapolis, after the George Floyd murder, seeking to explore how the work of Christian unity can contribute to the promotion of racial justice across all levels of society. In the UK, the writers’ group using the resources, has focused on the 30th anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, which we mark in 2023. The work of restoring hope through justice, undertaken in Stephen’s memory, continues to inspire and change lives for the better but there is still a long way to go in this respect. There is so much to focus on with regard to racism, as well as many other aspects of our national life, that shows injustice towards people of colour and the concern we have for young men (mainly) facing acts of violence; also for the safety of women and young girls and what causes them/us not

to be safe; for discrimination of groups that do not appear to fit how others in society consider the “norm” and are persecuted making their lives feel threatened and diminished. All of which need healing and reconciliation among those who contribute to the hurt. There is so much to consider, not just during this week, but every day to make our Church, society and ourselves more inclusive and accepting following Christ’s “We all may be one”.

What can be done? What can each of us do when we consider Unity? What does the word mean to us? What a difficult concept with so many meanings and contradictions within it. We are meant to be living in Unity and yet we are so diverse, with our different customs, cultures and attitudes, which is, after all, how the world was created and “God saw that it was good”. So, how do we reconcile that with how we are? Worth thinking about. The General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Dr Nicola Brady said, “As we join with other Christians around the world for this year’s Week of Prayer we pray that our hearts will be open to see and hear the many ways in which racism continues to destroy lives, and to discern the steps we can take as individuals and communities to heal the hurts and build a better future for everyone.”

Because so many of these areas of disunity seem so great, more than we can often cope with let alone overcome, perhaps we could think of individual ways, small steps, we can take to encourage unity among and between ourselves and with those with whom we meet; like developing contact and friendships with people we come across, making them feel welcome and showing interest and acceptance; thinking what is it about that group, that person, I do not like and why? What can I do to help overcome it? Friendship is key as listening to each other’s stories, learning about each other’s lives across barriers can bring understanding. It could all help. Hope, positive action and friendship are great unifiers and can make a difference.

The First Female Pastor in Palestine



Photos by Albin Hillert

There was great joy at the ordination of the Rev Sally Azar on the 22nd February that took place in the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem. Members of the The Lutheran World Federation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land with Church leaders and representatives from around the globe gathered to rejoice, participate in and witness the historic event. Sally Azar is the first Palestinian woman ordained to serve as a pastor in the Holy Land.

She has already served the Communion as a young woman in a leadership role for a number of years.

She grew up in the church where her father was pastor and is now a bishop. It was always clear to her that she wanted to work in a church context and with people. Many people around her recognized the potential of her gifts early on. But she felt it was important for her to make the decision of her profession alone regardless of other people's opinions and to have a wholehearted yes not only to this profession, but to this calling. That is why it took her a while to decide for herself that she wanted to become a pastor. Of course, her father was always a role model but never an interfeerer; he let her go her own way and make her own decisions. In the meantime, she was sure that becoming a pastor was her true calling.

Taken from an interview with Damaris Dilling on 17th January 2023 – with thanks

“Sally studied theology in Lebanon and Germany. Working with young people is particularly important to her here in the Middle East conflict: "Young people grow up here with walls and checkpoints. They know nothing else and think that this is the norm. I also grew up thinking that borders and checkpoints are commonplace. Only when I travelled to other countries did I realise that this is not everyday life in many

parts of the world. I enjoyed this freedom very much and asked myself why this is not the case in my home country. Especially under occupation, young people need a place to recharge."

Sally wants to do her best to help Palestinian Christians breathe a sigh of relief and create a home for them even in these difficult times. She will be working in the Jerusalem and Beit Sahur communities, and she is very much looking forward to connecting the English church in Jerusalem with the Arab assemblies and building projects together.

While she feels the specialness of being the first Palestinian woman pastor to be ordained and to be able to make a bit of history this circumstance is not so important to her personally, she is much more touched by the joy of her fellow people in the communities and the society about this fact, coupled with a great cordiality and a warm welcome that is shown to her. She is experiencing a lot of support from the church leadership". We wish her well and hope at some point she will visit the UK.

A full interview with Sally Azar on the occasion of her ordination is available at: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/first-palestinian-woman-be-ordained-pastor>

Night Shelter Project – Nehar

To remind you, our church will be hosting the **Night Shelter Project** every Tuesday from the 28th February - 18 April 2023. We will be hosting up to 17 homeless people who will arrive around 6.30pm. The food will be cooked and brought by volunteers and served to guests. We could do with more volunteers from our church who will be very welcome especially to help serve the breakfasts at 7.00 am before they go.

If any one feels called to serve the Lord in this ministry, please email me on neharbird@gmail.com

Toddlers Club

The Toddlers club is on every from 9.30-11.30am. It is held in church. There is a £3.00 entrance fee. For further details contact: 0 208 455 1873

How We Are

We send all those who are sick our love. Please continue to pray for all who have been unwell that they may gain in strength and good health as well as those who are grieving because of loss of a loved one.

We pray for:

Alice - We were so sad to hear that Alice died on Wednesday 18th January after a very long illness, lovingly cared for by Alexis and family. We send our prayers and condolences to them. Alice was a faithful member of Golders Green Church who gave much to us with her gentle presence. We all remember her kindness and friendship.

Anita's Brother Chris – his funeral is taking place this Friday. We pray for his wife, Sharmini, his children and for Anita and family.

Rose and the sudden loss of her friend, **Mrs Patience Emonena Ogbo**. Rose spent time with her when she was in Granada three months ago and is so grateful for the fact she was able to visit and see her before she died. Rose sent a Eulogy for her funeral which she was not able to attend.

Please pray for **David Agbim, Gideon Onwutalu** and **Rose Ochwada**. We hold them 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

Prayers with Kamran

- ❖ from Mondays to Thursdays, Kamran will be in church at 9.00am for a short time of prayer with anyone who would like to join him. This does not have to be compulsory; you are welcome to stay home and pray for the church and the parish each day for 15-20 minutes;
- ❖ he will also be in church each day for those who would like to visit and talk with him. Please consider making an appointment to ensure that he will be available to meet with you;

Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0aDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

One tap mobile

+442034815240,,8585545365#,,,,*400416# United Kingdom

+442039017895,,8585545365#,,,,*400416# United Kingdom

Dial by your location

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom

+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

+44 208 080 6591 United Kingdom

+44 208 080 6592 United Kingdom

+44 330 088 5830 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: 400416

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aemYT2p1YY>

GGPC Rota January 2023

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister (Chalice)	Av Desk	Service leader
29/01/23	I Corinthians 1:18-31	Abi	Alexis	Silvia	Daniel	Tony	
	Matthew 5:1-12						
05/02/23	I Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)	Sam	Sally	Sheila	Nehar	Onyeka	Ify

Church Bulletin

**The Parish of Golders Green
Parish Notices: 22/01/2023**

Sunday Service: 10 am - After the service, Prayer ministry is available for anyone who wishes to receive prayers.

Sunday School – please continuously keep our children and team in your prayer.

Service of Christian Unity – 22 January 3 pm - The Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross & Archangel Michael. Address- Golders Green Road, London, NW11 8HL

Sunday 29 January - Bring and share will take place straight after the service. All welcome to bring a dish to share.

The Community Coffee Morning – All welcome. Every Wednesday from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Communion Service will follow straight after.

The Toddler Group – Every Tuesday from 9.30am to 11.30am. Please join us for song, laughter, play, reading, crafts, tea & coffee, biscuits & fruit.

Prayers for the Church ministry and mission:

Please pray for the Senior Circle about to start soon. The Soup Kitchen which started in July. For the ongoing Church Maintenance issues. Pray for the Church Choir, Children Ministry, The Toddler Group, and the Mission of the Church.

For your prayers:

Please remember Alexis and family who just lost her mother, Anita as she is grieving the loss of her brother, Rose grieving for her friend, Myfanwy grieving for her sister. Please continue to pray for Alice, Tony, Mike Houghton, Eunice and Naila for God's healing.

Rota for Sunday 29 Jan 23

Reader: Abi

Intercession: Alexis

Hospitality: Silvia **Eucharist Minister:** Daniel

AV Desk: Tony

Contact details:

Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti

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