

# NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 8th February 2024



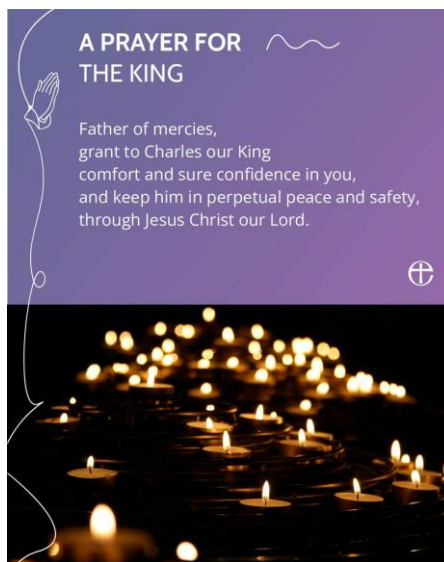
*Reconciliation Windows  
The Stephanskirche, Mainz, Germany*

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

**Listening to God:** Over the past 5 weeks We have been focusing on different ways of “Listening to God” in our services. Kamran has stressed how we hear God’s message through many ways which may be different for each of us and illuminate our thinking. But, the important thing is that we listen and observe carefully and see what the outcome can be as a result. The headings are outlined below. Perhaps you might like to think further how God does speak to you. It may be one or two specific ways or, over time, through all of them as we mature and recognize things differently. Look at the diagram below and think of the ways you find most appropriate to you.

**Intercessions:** Jenny’s intercessions on Sunday focused on the conference she had been on on, “Migration, Refugees and Asylum-seekers”, particularly apt at this time as well as the fact that the Bishops in the House of Lords have also been speaking and warning on the dangers of the Measures the Government are proposing. In your daily prayers you might like to use the intercessions below. Each one has a space for us to pause and bring our own thoughts, to think of all those who are suffering and constantly rejected.

**Prayer for King Charles III:** It was very sad to hear that the King is undergoing treatment for cancer. A prayer has been sent for all to pray for him and his recovery. As we pray, we also remember those who are suffering too, that God’s healing spirit may be upon them and all those who care for them.



**Racial Awareness Week:** The Reconciliation Windows at the top of the newsletter comes from, “The Stephanskirche, Mainz”, in Germany. The luminous blue windows are by Marc Chagall. They were created between 1978 and 1985 and depict scenes from the Hebrew Bible. They stand as a testimony to postwar reconciliation (the church was badly damaged by allied bombing) and understanding between Jewish and Christian faith communities drawing on their common heritage in these scriptures. Chagall, a Jew himself, had been forced to flee Nazi-occupied France.

This leads on to the fact that this coming week is “**Racial Awareness Week**” with its theme of “Listen, Act, Change” (A bit like our diagram below of Listening to God). The intention of the week is to have a UK wide initiative uniting thousands of organisations, churches and individuals to address race equality barriers in the workplace and wherever people meet. Many organizations have joined up to develop ways of working together in order to defeat the barriers that damage and inhibit people from full participation in their work place, organizations and lives, from achieving what they could and should. One week is just a little time but at least one thing we can each do is to be aware of the damage prejudice brings that inevitably leads in its extreme to ostracism, wars and unrest we are seeing now and consider how we can bring about peace and reconciliation in the best ways we can between people - hard though it is and the length of time it takes- we can but try.



**Black Madonna of Covid-19 Lockdown by Kate Egawa:** On Saturday I attended the celebration of a friend’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ordination to the Priesthood”. He is vicar of St Mary’s and St James’s in West End Lane, NW6, Fr Robert Thompson, quite close to us. Robert is on the General Synod. He is well known for his fight against injustice, prejudice of all kinds and for those who feel rejected by the Church. He is courageous and outspoken and, as a result, people came from across the country, as well as those in his congregation, to celebrate with him and give thanks for his ministry. The congregation there is very similar to ours, coming from many different countries. After Covid, he decided to have a statue created by the sculptor, Kate Egawa, in honour of “Our Lady of Kilburn”, to embody the people of his parish “that God has given to me as a gift to care for to love and to empower”. He describes the statue as, “utterly black and fabulously beautiful”, which seeing it for the first time, it certainly is. I have written below about the Black Madonna he commissioned for his congregation post Covid.

**Bible Study:** As mentioned on Sunday, Kamran is holding weekly discussions throughout Lent on Thursdays from 6.30pm in the church room where the Sunday School meet or, for those who find it easier, by zoom. The discussions will be on the Epistle of James. Please let him know if you are coming.

**"Jesus on the Margins:** I drew your attention in the last newsletter, to a discussion at St Paul's Cathedral, which took place on Tuesday evening, between, Anderson Jeremiah, soon to be Bishop of Edmonton, & Paula Gooder, from the Cathedral. I linked into it and so did Jenny. I think she will agree with me it was one of the best most inspiring events we have listened to. Our bishop-to-be talked clearly and so lucidly of his faith, theology & Christology from his experiences as a South Indian Dalit whose father was a pastor. It was moving and inspiring to hear. As a Dalit (untouchable) he experienced what it was like to be regarded as "on the Edge" and his way of coming to terms with it and managing it. This to me, and others listening who messaged about it afterwards, showed how they were inspired at such expression of Christian thinking and action, especially to those on the margins. What a good appointment.

If you would like to hear it, the YouTube Premiere of Jesus on the Margins with Anderson Jeremiah, is available at <https://youtu.be/Y4ViUSEel48> Just click on the link and the film will start immediately. The film will be permanently available at this link. St Paul's hope you enjoy the film".

**URGENT MESSAGE RE The TODDLER GROUP:** This is just a reminder that we desperately need more volunteers to help on Tuesdays if the Toddler group is to continue. If you feel able to help with this or **know anyone who would like to do so**, please let Kamran or Tracey know on 020 8455 1873. It need not be every Tuesday but if we could get a Rota of people it would be so good and we could keep the Toddler Group going. Thank you.

**Diary of Yearly Service Celebrations:** Attached to the newsletter, as an extra page, is a time-line of Services and Events that are taking place throughout the year. It will be helpful as an Aide-Memoir to put on your Kitchen notice board or in your mobile phone.

**Future Events – Ideas:** As mentioned last week It has been suggested it would be a good idea to plan for a variety of events, paced throughout the year, that we could join in together. The PCC has discussed this and will be giving further information via the Newsletter and in announcements in notices in church. Ideas still welcome.

**Baptism/Confirmation classes:** Please let Kamran know if you, or any member of your family, would like to be confirmed. Now we have a newly appointed Bishop of Edmonton (Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah) it will be great to have him confirm members of our church family.

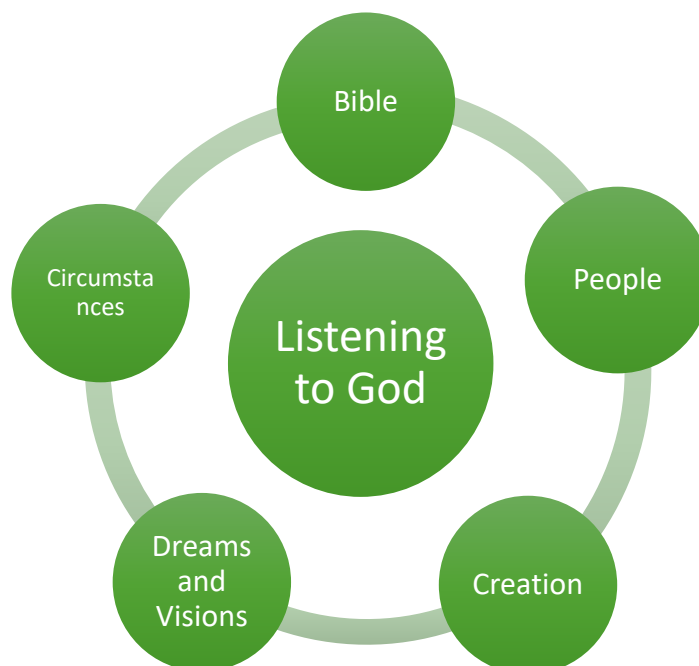
**Wednesday Morning Coffee: from 10.30am-12noon.** Our time of gentle exercise is going well followed by coffee and a chat – and it is fun - so do come and join in. At 12noon we have a short communion service.

**Facebook page:** For those of you who are on facebook, Kamran has set up a Golders Green Church facebook page. You can join it by going to facebook and searching for **Golders Green Parish Church**. So far we have 4 followers!

**With love and good wishes – Sally**



**Listening to God**



As Kamran said, "There is no one way to hear God". We can hear God's word through "The Bible" being read to us or reading it for ourselves, and suddenly hearing a passage or verse we have been familiar with that brings a particular meaning that changes or helps us. We can hear God's word through "People"; people who we know or come across and maybe don't know very well, or from listening to the radio or hearing/seeing on television that brings an awareness of something that springs into our deeply buried thoughts. "Creation", speaks to us, probably more than we realise, wordlessly, through its beauty, shapes, aromas, patterns, that lifts our hearts, makes us question, look more keenly, praise, wonder, be full of awe, lighting up recognitions that maybe we hadn't had before. One of my friends, who is an artist, made me aware of the beauty of industrial art in shapes and forms of buildings and constructions that I had formerly taken for granted or just ignored; now I never look at any of it in the same way and honour the sheer creativity of those who create it. She brought together for me the "People" and "Creation" aspects of being aware of how people use their God-given gifts. Some people are lit up by "Dreams and Visions" that speak to them in different ways and illuminate their thinking and awareness. There are many examples in the Bible of this happening. Is this one for you? How does it happen? Then there are the "Circumstances" that suddenly and unexpectedly happen, the "Out of the Blue", moments that jolt us into an action or a thought that changes direction for us or makes a connection that we hadn't had or thought of before, and our lives are changed. "Listening to God" or "Listening for God" is always present if we look or listen.



*The mystery artwork of an unknown artist  
dubbed "the Borrowdale Banksy"  
in the Borrowdale Valley Lake District of Cumbria,*

## Intercessions 4 February 2024 – Jenny

“Last weekend I attended a thought-provoking and sobering conference about migration, refugees and asylum-seekers. It was particularly topical in the context of the law currently going through parliament about the rightly controversial Rwanda policy. Today’s prayers are based on those used at the conference, with thanks to Geoff Weaver for his permission to use them”.

### **God of the stranger and the exile**

You long for a world where no-one has to flee their home to escape violence, poverty, oppression or disaster.  
You long for a world where we can all live in freedom, dignity and peace  
as sisters and brothers, one human family, children of God.

As we worship you today, open our hearts to your divine compassion  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen**

Welcoming God, we bring to you a world of conflict, oppression and war, where many are forced to flee for their lives leaving everything behind, and to live in fear, uncertainty and hopelessness.

*Silence*

Lord when did we see you?

**I was a stranger and you welcomed me.**

Generous God, we bring to you a world of inequality, with much poverty and need, where many cannot afford to feed their families, and flee in search of a better life

*Silence*

Lord when did we see you?

**I was a stranger and you welcomed me.**

Creator God, we bring to you a world where the climate is changing, where extreme weather and natural disasters drive people from their homes.

*Silence*

Lord when did we see you?

**I was a stranger and you welcomed me.**

Loving God, we bring to you a world where so many people are oppressed and discriminated against for reason of their ethnicity, sexuality, culture, religion or political beliefs, and cannot stay in their homes.

*Silence*

Lord when did we see you?

**I was a stranger and you welcomed me.**

We remember all those who have lost their lives in the quest for sanctuary: all who have died in small boats; all who have died in lorries; all who have been killed at border crossings.  
Strangers whom we never had the opportunity to welcome.

*Silence*

We pray for all in this country and overseas who work to help and support refugees and asylum-seekers; the agencies and volunteers who provide welcome; those who have opened their homes to strangers; those who represent them and advocate for their rights.

God give us grace to see you in the faces of human need, of displaced persons, refugees, migrants, asylum-seekers, of all those who are desperate and seeking sanctuary.

Where we have been hard-hearted, forgive us.



Where we have been fearful, forgive us.

Where we have put our own interests first, forgive us.

Give us compassion to reach out in the name of your son, the child refugee, our saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

Thinking of ourselves in Golders Green, please will you make us a truly welcoming and hospitable church, so that we show your love and care to everyone who visits us. Thank you for the opportunities you've given us already, especially the toddler group, the Wednesday coffee morning, the night shelter, the South Asian service and our Sunday school. May we as a community, and all of our activities, be channels of your love and grace, so that everyone who comes here experiences something of you and is changed..

In a moment of silence, let's pray for everyone we know who needs a special touch of God's love and grace, trusting that he knows exactly what they need and that he will deliver.....

Refreshing, healing, providing, God, we place in your presence everyone we've just prayed for, confident in your overwhelming love for them.

Loving Father, help us to change.

To change ourselves and to change our world.

To know the need for it.

To deal with the pain of it.

To feel the joy of it.

To undertake the journey without understanding the destination.

**Amen**



## Black Madonna of Covid-19 Lockdown



During Covid, with the stress and loss that it brought in the Kilburn area (as with many others), the vicar of St James and St Mary's NW6 asked a friend, a sculptor, Kate Agwawa, to create a Black Madonna that represented and honoured those in his congregation. He raised the money and the statue was unveiled a while ago by the Bishop of London. Attending the celebration of his 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Priesthood last Saturday, although I had seen many photographs of her, I got to see the real thing. At the end of his packed, wonderfully musical and rich celebratory service, a "Litany of Our Lady of Kilburn", was held with us gathered around the Statue. It was moving and beautiful, giving much praise to Mary the mother of Jesus, honouring her life of faithfulness, hardship and determination. During the Litany, a poem by professor Nicola Slee, who was my tutor at Queen's Foundation at Birmingham University was read, emphasizing all the qualities of Mary of her feistiness, as a prophet and liberator –although she is seldom viewed as that through the acquiescent and vapid way she is so often portrayed. This is the poem, called "Mary's Prayer" \*

*Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary  
for her courage, boldness, her initiative;  
her willingness to journey, to change and to suffer;  
See her wholeheartedness to God's work and Gods work of Liberation.  
May we too be bold in believing, generous in self offering  
and wholehearted  
in our participation in God's work of Justice and freedom.*



\* *The Book of Mary by Nicola Slee pub SPCK*

## 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.

How good to **see Simon and Anita** in church on Sunday looking so well. Everyone was so pleased to see them after such a long time and thanked God for their health and return to us. They are attending Margaret Morgan's funeral on the 13<sup>th</sup> February in Kent, and have kindly offered to take me too. The card of condolence, signed by our church family members, saying how much we appreciated her service to this church and all she did for us will be given to her brother John Maberley. We pray for her with love and gratitude.

It was good too to see Eunice back with us after her eye operation looking much better. We all hope the operation is successful and she stays well.

**Kelly's Father, John Rudge**, had promising results from his examination at his last appointment. His operation is taking place on Thursday when you receive the newsletter and there is optimism about the outcome. We will let everyone know for next week's edition. Kelly sends her thanks to us for all our prayers and for God's healing hand to continue giving him health and strength.

We keep in our prayers **Sheila Grodzinki, Anita and Simon, David Agbim, Chuba Agbim, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Annie Bwanaope and Rose Ochwada**. We hold them in our hearts that they may be filled with God's healing love.

Please pray for a full return to health for **Tony**. We pray that God's healing spirit may come upon him and help him make a good recovery.

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](mailto: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. Kamran 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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0xDaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti

Office Tel: 020 8455 1873, Website: [www.gg-pc.co.uk](http://www.gg-pc.co.uk)



## GGPC Rota February 2024

February 24								
Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Manager	Service leader
11/02/24	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Elizabeth	Alexis	Silvia	Sally/Tony	Onyeka	Florance	
	Mark 9:2-9							
18/02/24	1 Corinthians 9:24-27	Sam	Anne	Sally	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Dozie	Tim	Jenny
	Mark 1:40-45							
25/02/24	2 Corinthians 1:18-22	Abi	Nehar	Nehar/Chinwe	Tim/Naila	Ruth	Chinwe	
<b>Bring &amp; Share</b>	Mark 2:1-12							
03/03/24	2 Corinthians 3:1-6	Keith	Nwando	Ezim	Nwadi/Nehar	Shaniv	Alexis	Alexis
	Mark 2:13-22							

## Services and Event dates for GGPC 2024

### Services

- Ash Wednesday - 14 February at 6:30 pm
- World day of pray - 1st March (venue to be confirmed)
  
- Maundy (Holy) Thursday – 28 March 5 pm ???
- Asian Lent Service - 28 March 6 pm
  
- Good Friday - 29 March at 10 am
- Stations of the cross ???
  
- Easter Sunday – 31 March 10 am
- Ascension Day (Thursday) 9 May at 7 pm
- Pentecost Sunday – 19 May
- Trinity Sunday – 26 May
- Harvest Sunday - 22 September
- All Saints' Day – 1 November
- Christ the king Sunday - 24 November
- Carol Service – 22 December

### Social Events

#### Ideas

1. picnic on Hampstead Heath with a visit to the newly renovated Kenwood House;
2. A retreat with an inspiring speaker.
3. re- engaging with the St Alban's Abbey Festival Day in June
4. perhaps a visit to Canterbury Cathedral and a guided tour round the Cathedral.
5. Joint BBQ - 21 July (Sunday)