

NEWSLETTER

27th June 2024



Dear Everyone – Greetings to you all.

How good that **the Revd Kristin Breuss**, came to us and stood in for Kamran on Sunday while he is recuperating. She was so welcomed by everyone, who enjoyed her return to us and her sermon.

She has kindly sent her sermon for the newsletter. For those who didn't hear it, like me. I have to say, reading it, what a timely one it was especially for those who feel they need to think about how they feel about themselves, are depressed and insecure. It is so full of hope, strong thoughts and belief in the strength and words of Jesus to sustain us. Thank you, Kristin.

Election and "Pray Your Part": At this particular time, we have so much to focus on that need our prayers - and actions too - remembering what James in his letter said about, "Faith without works!". We don't really have to be reminded that the Election is coming up on July 4th. We have been praying for an outcome that will be a Just and Fair one for all in our country. Many have been using the booklets **"Pray Your Part": 21-day journey of prayer and reflection** or receiving them by daily emails. Many of us have found them extremely helpful focusing on the different aspect of the life we live and the duty of leaders.

Hustings at Alyth Synagogue is taking place on Thursday 27th June at 7.30pm. Hoping many of you are able to come. I know by the time you receive this newsletter time will be short, but, if you do want to attend, [Click here](#) to let Alyth know you are coming – you can also submit a question to the candidates when you sign up. Light Refreshments will be provided.

World Refugee Day: was on the 20th June, when churches, Institutions, groups and individuals prayed for the those around the world who have been forced to flee their homes and struggle to find refuge and a home that welcomes them. There are many people across the UK working to make them welcome and supporting their needs in different ways, and in the generosity of spirit Jesus requires of us through his instruction that we ought to love our neighbours as ourselves. Below are two prayers Jenny used in her intercessions for this day and for all refugees.

Windrush Day Prayer: Below is a prayer for Windrush Day written by **the Revd Dr Israel Oluwole Olofinjana**. I have written a short piece on the day and my feelings about how the Windrush people were, and many still are, treated as I have a much loved grandson who is a descendant of paternal grandparents who came over at that time. Leviticus 19: -34 talked of *"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do them wrong"*. *But these people were invited by our government to bring their skills and gifts and yet were*

treated as if they were “strangers in the land” and not coming to their “Mother country” as they had been grown up to believe.

Creation Care in a Climate Crisis: Sophie Sanders from the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity has written a last in the series of reflections on, creation care and asks us, “what aspect of creation care will you choose to champion?”

Bible study: We need to decide on the next date for the Bible study as the next session falls on 4th July, when I think most people will be concentrating on other things! Watch this space.

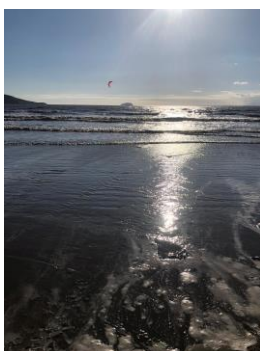
Wednesday Morning Coffee: from 10.30am-12noon; coffee, cake and a chat – and it is fun - so do come and join in. The 12noon communion will restart when Kamran is back with us.

Baptism and Confirmation Service Date: Remember that Bishop Jeremiah will be visiting us on **Sunday 22 September 2024**, to baptise and confirm our candidates at the 10.00am service. **Please put this date in your diaries**

Birthday Party Invitation: **Please remember that we have** all been invited by Zehra Alliana’s family to her Christening held in our church on Saturday **29th June at 1.00pm**, followed by a birthday party at, Holy Cross and St Michaels Hall, along Golders Green Road.

Food Bank: Again, thank you to those who have contributed so generously to the food bank. Your donations are much appreciated by the volunteers at All Saints who run it and especially by the families who make good use of all you provide.

Much love and good wishes – Sally



Sleeping in Life’s Storms – Sermon – Kristin Breuss

Mark 4. 35-41

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” **36** Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. **37** A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. **38** Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “**Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?**”

39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

40 He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

I. Stress Quiz

- A. Anyone here ever get stressed?
1. stress good for us?
 2. stress bad for us?
- B. BBC science magazine called 'Focus' article 'Stress-proof Your Life'
1. Good things about stress:
 - a. help deal with a crisis and perform in the short term (flight or fight response that shuts down digestion,
 - b. floods us with energy and reduces need to rest),
 - c. shown to be more likely to help others when under stress,
 - d. may make us temporarily more optimistic as we tend to pay more attention to positive info and discount the negative info when stressed
 2. On the other hand, there is more and more evidence of long-term health risks associated with stress.
 - a. The adrenal glands that sit on top of the kidneys release stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol for these fight or flight situations, turning off long term repair processes for short term performance.
 - b. They are not meant to be working 24/7 and it takes its toll — BBC Focus magazine reported a study over 4 years that showed the connection between those with high activity in the amygdala (part of brain that releases these stress hormones) and conditions including: heart attack, angina, heart failure, stroke and arterial disease.
 - c. Chronic stress has also been linked with reduced learning, depression, obesity, teeth grinding, hair loss, lowered fertility, susceptibility to infections and some types of cancer.
 3. In the US, a study showed a self-reported increase in stress of 30% over the last 3 decades.
 4. Here's the question — is this the way to live?
 5. **Let's look at Jesus.** Was HE stressed? Numerous examples where Jesus probably SHOULD have been stressed
 - A. age 12 in Jerusalem, alone in temple, parents and family already gone - **not stressed**
 - B. accused by his family and teachers of the law - **not stressed**
 - C. on trial for treason through his claims to be son of God - **not stressed**
 - D. this famous story read today where a storm is raging and **not only is Jesus not stressed — he is asleep!**
 - E. **Jesus is DIS-TRESSED** and frustrated at his disciples' inability to get it and to the leaders for missing the point of his ministry, but he is not stressed.
 - **What about the disciples?** Were they stressed? YES! — **"Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"**
 - **What about us?**
 - A. I have often believed the lie that success and stress are inextricably linked. It's a lie! I think Jesus' sleeping in the boat would have completely annoyed me..... in my family when we face a stressful situation, I have been known to be annoyed by others calm, as if stress is a security blanket for success or more certain rescue.
 - B. What is the root of this LIE? One word - FEAR.
 - C. I want to suggest there are two kinds of fear in operation in this story and in us, both are evident in the disciples' short question to the newly awakened Jesus — **'Don't you care if we drown?'**:
 1. our fear of insignificance - the 'don't you care' part of the question
 2. Our fear of drowning / failure / disaster / death - 'if we drown' part of the question

3. Perhaps some of us can relate to this question too - JESUS, DON'T YOU CARE IF WE DROWN? Let's unpack it.
- 'DON'T YOU CARE': our **fear of insignificance**. How often is our fear of insignificance the root of our stress? How often does our stress inflict further upon ourselves and others?
 - A. What if the disciples had known / believed they were significant, that Jesus DID care?
 1. Would they have rebuked the wind and waves themselves? In Mark 3.14, it says, *'14 He appointed twelve[a] that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.'*
 2. Note that the language used to quell the wind and waves parallels that used to drive out demons. One of the first stories in Mark is Jesus driving out an impure spirit: **25** "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. *"Come out of him!"* Jesus similarly *'rebukes the wind and waves'* and *'silences the sea'*. The disciples are likely to have had the authority to quell the storm already. What they lacked was faith.
 3. What might this mean to our lives, to know that WE TOO are significant, and that Jesus is within us, giving us authority through the power of the Holy Spirit to shift atmospheres, bring healing and more freedom?
 4. John 14.12-13 *'Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me with also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything I will do it.'*
 - Now let's turn to the second fear in the disciples' question — often our question, right? — the **'if we drown'** part of 'Teacher, don't you care **if we drown?**' — this is about our fear of drowning, literally in the disciples' case but we can think of this figuratively as well
 - A. **While we battle the fear of insignificance by knowing who we are in God, we battle our fear of 'drowning', by knowing who God is.** [REPEAT]
 - B. The two work together via an amazing multiplier effect of course, which is why the spiritual giants — Abraham, Moses, Hannah, David, Esther, Mary the Mother of God, MLK, Mother Theresa, Bryan Stevenson, Immacule Ilibagiza, Rev Kamran and his wife Naila, many of us here — did and do what many would say is impossible.
 - C. How many of us forget who Jesus is when we fear drowning, when we feel overwhelmed, when the fear of failure crowds out the purpose and possibility that excited us in the first place?
 1. Perhaps this is the reason God keeps reminding those He calls who he is (Moses at burning bush) *'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'* (Exodus 3.6). (Exodus 6.7) *'Say to the Israelites. . . You shall know that I am the Lord you God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians.'* Exodus 15.26 *'I am the Lord who heals you.'* Song of Hannah (1 Sa 2.1-5) *'My heart exults in the Lord, my strength is exalted in my God'*, Magnificat song of Mary *'The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.'* (Luke 1.46-55). Numerous examples in the psalms (Psalm 80 *'I am the Lord your God who brought you up out of the land of Egypt'*.)
 2. Remember, there was a spiritual dimension to this storm - I suspect that the enemy did not want them to get to the demoniac on the other side who ends up healed and delivered and testifies about Jesus in Gentile territory, one reason the word about Jesus spread. Jesus had said *'let us go to the other side'*. If the creator of the world, the one who said *'let their be light'* says *'let there be.... anything'*, it will be. So, the

disciples not only could have rebuked the storm but perhaps they too may have slept in it knowing they would get there safely?

D. **OUR STORIES IN GOD** - Both fear of insignificance and fear of drowning point to the need to know our stories in God — ‘Where was God in this?’ Worth doing and reminding ourselves.

1. Hardest most counter-intuitive thing in the Gospel may be that when we are most stressed is when we need to most rest. We need to learn to sleep in the storms — because we have Jesus.

2. Matthew 11.28 ‘Come to me all you who are weary and I will give you _____’ REST!

3. When we are in Christ, we can rest in the storm.

4. What gets in the way - that 4 letter word FEAR

E. Jesus’ response following his quelling the storm: “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

1. Fear rooted in a lie — may be these 1) that we are insignificant 2) that God will let us drown

2. 1 John 4: ‘Perfect love casts out fear’. God is perfect love. God casts out fear. We need to be filled to the measure with God.

• **How?** - SHAPE OUR HABITS AROUND HIM through a life of prayer, worship and fellowship that keeps our eyes fixed on Jesus in the storm, that gives us the faith to know our significance to contend in prayer and action, in fact to allow our lives to be a living prayer — and to be free from fear and rest amidst the stress

A. Mother Theresa’s journals revealed her battles with the dark night of the soul — doubts, struggles — but also her commitment to prayer whether or not she felt like it and the daily decisions she made in the slums of Calcutta. Her holiness was forged through habits that withstood the storms, the doubts, the identity crisis, the lack of understanding.

B. KNOW OUR STORIES

III. **RESPONSE:** PLEASE STAND.

Come Holy Spirit. Show us where you are and have been in the storms of our lives. Show us what if anything you are calling us to do or be - to rebuke the storm or to rest with you on your pillow.

PLACE HANDS ON HEAD. Lord, I ask you to take every thought captive to Christ. I ask you to remove any thought — about you, about me and my significance, about our story together, about the situations I face — that is not of you and lay it at the foot of the cross.

OPEN HANDS. Lord I hand you any fear within me and receive your PERFECT LOVE afresh today. Release me into greater place of freedom and peace.



Creation Care in a Climate Crisis

Sophie Sanders - London Institute of Contemporary Christianity

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever”. Revelation 22:1–5

I asked an AI image generator to show me what heaven looked like. In a matter of seconds, my screen was filled with a staircase made from fluffy white clouds, set against a heavily airbrushed sky with stripy sunbeams. Worn down by a constant barrage of news alerts about the latest earthquake, terrorist threat, or political scandal, and exhausted by the rhythms of daily work, you might be tempted to think this people-free, landscape-free, and task-free picture seems pretty perfect.

But that’s not what the Bible says. We’re told our final home, the new creation, will be a perfect garden city with streets, crystal clear waters, and abundant fruit trees – and that we’ll work, too. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, there will ‘no longer be any curse’. And that means that there’ll be no global conflict, terminal diagnoses, manipulative bosses, devastating floods, or terrible tsunamis. Work will be all that it was designed to be: a fulfilling set of worshipful tasks that help all to flourish in a harmonious environment.

As his people, we’re to live and work now as we will in the garden city. And that includes looking after birds, animals, trees, plants, and the natural environment in every sphere of our lives. Because Jesus cares about every single part of his creation. To take one example, have you ever thought that he cares about rivers because they provide water which sustains life and reflects his beauty? His heart breaks when he sees floating pieces of litter in the waters. But he also cares about the elevated flood risk caused by debris – so often, these climate-change-fuelled disasters have a disproportionately large impact on the individuals and communities who’ve contributed least to the problem.

Put simply, caring about the climate is a way in which we can love our present and future neighbours and join in God’s work to restore what was broken by human sin and create something new and even more beautiful.

In the knowledge that Jesus will return and regenerate this world, we can be hope-filled activists. The question is, **“what aspect of creation care will you choose to champion?”** You could club together with other parents to create a carpool for school drop-offs and pick-ups, champion climate neutral products and green policies in your workplace or suggest a clothes swap as an alternative to going shopping with friends. I’m ready and raring to go. Are you?

The 22nd June 2024 Empire Windrush's Remembrance Day - Sally

The 22nd June 2024 was the 76th Anniversary of the Empire Windrush's arrival in Britain. Thousands came at the request of the British Government to help us with the work and jobs that we did not have people to carry out. They came in hope and trust that they would be well received, that the UK was their “Mother Country”

who would treat them well. What they found instead was racism, ingratitude, prejudice and hurt. This is to our shame and continues to be. Those who came, and those who followed, included my oldest grandson's paternal grandparents, who worked all the time they were here until they died. They paid their taxes, were faithful church goers, worked in their community and gave much to this country. They deserved better, as did their many friends. They were loved and good people. For them and so many others we seemed and still seem to have lost sight of the biblical commands on how we should treat people in our land. Below is a prayer written by, The Revd Dr Israel Oluwole Olofinjana, of the Queen's Foundation, University of Birmingham, Director of the One People Commission of the Evangelical Alliance and Pastor of Woolwich Central Baptist Church, a multi-ethnic, multicultural inner city church in south east London.

Prayer by Revd Dr Israel Oluwole Olofinjana Windrush Day

Dear Heavenly Father

We thank you for the Windrush generation. Thank you because their presence in Britain has been a blessing, both to church and society. We appreciate their varied contributions to society through the NHS, education, culture, politics and community. We also recognise their contributions to church growth, church planting and church renewal. We acknowledge that without their presence, our churches would be impoverished and incomplete.

Forgive us, Lord, for the triple trauma that the Windrush generation and their descendants have experienced. Have mercy on us for the Windrush experience, the disappointment of the Windrush scandal and its continued aftermath. Have mercy on us when we do not recognise the humanity in others and treat people created in your image as statistics, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Lord, we long and aspire for better days. We seek and look forward to a society that is just and integrated. As we celebrate the Windrush generation, remembering the struggles, celebrating the contributions, and flourishing for the future, let hope arise and let your kingdom come!

World Refugee Prayers from Jenny

These are the two prayers with which I began and ended my intercession, the Sunday after World Refugee Day. I'm including the full text of 'Home', not just the extracts that I used in our service.

Who are those people? By Joseph Veneroso, M.M.

Who are these
clamouring to enter
our land, our homes, our hearts?
Why are they here
disturbing our peace?
What do they want
from us who have more
than enough for ourselves?
Where do they come from,
speaking such foreign words
we do not understand?

We suspect they come to steal, harm or kill,
to spoil our culture
taking advantage of our good will.

We fear most what they themselves flee:

hunger, poverty, disease,
violence, war, oppression.

Most of all we dislike the truth
they reveal about ourselves,
who put conditions on God's
unconditional love for all.

Jesus, it's your face we try not to see,
your voice we strive not to hear,
your word we'd rather not obey.

Help us to recognize
they are you and
they are us.

"Home" by Warsan Shire

No one leaves home unless
home is the mouth of a shark
you only run for the border
when you see the whole city running as well
your neighbors running faster than you
breath bloody in their throats
the boy you went to school with
who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory
is holding a gun bigger than his body
you only leave home
when home won't let you stay.
no one leaves home unless home chases you
fire under feet
hot blood in your belly
it's not something you ever thought of doing
until the blade burnt threats into
your neck
and even then you carried the anthem under
your breath
only tearing up your passport in an airport toilet
sobbing as each mouthful of paper
made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.
you have to understand,
that no one puts their children in a boat
unless the water is safer than the land
no one burns their palms
under trains
beneath carriages

no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck
feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled
means something more than journey.
no one crawls under fences
no one wants to be beaten
pitied

no one chooses refugee camps
or strip searches where your
body is left aching
or prison,
because prison is safer
than a city of fire
and one prison guard
in the night
is better than a truckload
of men who look like your father
no one could take it
no one could stomach it
no one skin would be tough enough.
i want to go home,
but home is the mouth of a shark'
home is the barrel of the gun
and no one would leave home
unless home chased you to the shore
unless home told you
to quicken your legs
leave your clothes behind
crawl through the desert
wade through the oceans
drown
save
be hunger
beg
forget pride
your survival is more important
no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear
saying-
leave,
run away from me now
i dont know what i've become
but i know that anywhere
is safer than here

How We Are

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

We continue to pray for a return to health to those who are sick, that God's healing hands may be upon them.

We keep in our prayers: **Kamran for a return to full health, for Myfanwy Khan, Anita and Simon Houghton, Eunice Adiele, Gideon Onwutalu, Annie Bwanaope, Sir Edmund Onochie, Rose Ochwada and Sheila Grodzinsky who is back in hospital. We wish her well and many prayers.** 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 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

Contact details:

Parish Priest: Revd Kamran Bhatti

Office Tel: 020 8455 1873 Website: www.gg-pc.co.uk

GGPC ROTA

June 24 – July 24								
Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Duty Managers	Service leader
30/06/24	Colossians 1:15-28	Nwennaka	Jenny	Cynthia/Chinwe	Daniel/Ezim	Dozie		Sunday School
Bring & Share	Luke 10:38-42							
07/07/24	2 Corinthians 12:2-10	Ash	Tony	Florance	Nwando/Nehar	Onyeka	Florance	
	Mark 6:1-13							
14/07/24	Ephesians 1:3-14	Elizabeth	Sally	Silvia	Sally/Tony	Ruth	Tim	Jenny
	Mark 6:14-29							
21/07/24	Ephesians 2:11-22	Poppy	Nwando	Sally	Tim/Naila	Shaniv	Chinwe	
	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56							
28/07/24	Ephesians 3:14-21	Sam	Kai	Cynthia/Chinwe	Ifeyinwe/Onyeka	Dozie	Alexis	Nehar
Bring & Share	John 6:1-21							
		Abi	Jenny	Naila	Daniel/Ezim	Onyeka		