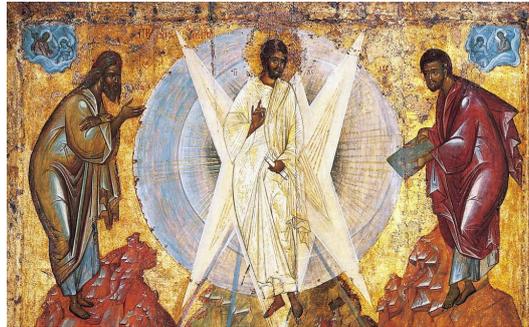


NEWSLETTER

26th February 2026



Dear Everyone - Greetings to you all

First Sunday in Lent: In his sermon last Sunday Kamran focused on **Fast- Pray - Give** as the key words for this time. As Jesus was tempted, so are we on a daily basis. We are tempted by the devil whose main purpose is to push us away from God, when our purpose is to bring us nearer.

Reflecting on the story of Jesus in the desert and his temptations he urged us we should think, “Where are we in this story?” The devil was trying to tempt Jesus to misuse his divine power and take away his strength. Jesus was hungry, he was fasting. The Devil tempted him to eat by turning the stones into bread, but Jesus refused. So the devil failed. He was next taken to the Temple which was the centre of power and worship and tempted him to throw himself from the highest point, quoting scripture, psalm 91, “for he shall give his angels charge over you ,to keep you in all your ways”. but Jesus knew life is sacred and precious. Then he was taken up on a high mountain and offered all the riches and power . Jesus in his response reminds us that wealth is not the object of our world, but serving God is. Jesus said “Get behind me Satan”. Jesus won the battle through the cross and forgiveness for us all. How might we respond, what would we do? We all need the Grace of Jesus. Kamran asked, “What does our Wilderness look like?”. We should be be honest with ourselves. “What temptation is ours now?”, Is it comfort? Things of the world? We should reflect on this during the days of Lent.

Bishop of London Vacancy: As you know, our Bishop of London is now the Archbishop of Canterbury. While we are so pleased for her and congratulate her, her going leaves a vacancy for a new Bishop of London. Consultations are taking place across the Diocese by the Archbishops’ and Prime MInister’s Appointment Advisers asking people to share their views on the qualities you would like to see in the new bishop. It is so very important we have a bishop who understands and can work well within our richly diverse diocese. Please could you think about this. On Sunday I will be collecting your views and sending them forward to the **Appointment Advisers**, who are, **Mr Jonathan Hellewell and Canon Stehen Knott** or, if you prefer you can email them at crownandlordchancellorpatronage@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Birthday Celebrations: We celebrated Ezim’s birthday on Sunday by singing Happy Birthday and praying for a good year for her. We also had a beautiful creamy cake! Daniel also told us that he was celebrating having a “special” birthday on March 8th with celebratory food after the service. He and Ezim hoped that everyone would be there to rejoice with him and the family.



Anita: After an operation on her back in the Royal Free, Anita is now home. She is making a slow recovery, cared for by Simon. We send her our love and prayers that her pain eases and she makes a good recovery.



World Day of Prayer: As you know the annual “World Day of Prayer” is taking place on, **Friday 6th March at 2.00pm in our church.** The committee for the “World Day of Prayer” had a really good rehearsal last Friday. It is a beautifully composed service put together by the women of Nigeria. Rose, who is on the committee, is hoping that as many of our congregation who are free will be able to come. Our Nigerian congregation members will wear their traditional dress and contribute some Nigerian dishes. There will be displays of Art, and music from Nigeria that many of us are familiar with. The theme is, “I Will Give You Rest” and brings us a powerful invitation drawn from Matthew 11:28-30. It will be great and one we are looking forward to. Please support this service.



Listening and Learning, Bible Study: For Lent, Bible Study will take place on each Thursday at at 6.30pm. It will be held in church as usual but also on Zoom to enable those who cannot get to church to join in. The link is: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81391462394?pwd=Iw9o8zKMnoUjEx2TwGmOlwUm21F2V.1> Meeting ID: 813 9146

2394 Passcode: 226547 --- One tap mobile +12532050468,,81391462394#,,,,*226547# US
 +12532158782,,81391462394#,,,,*226547# US (Tacoma) Join instructions
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/91391462394?signature=9LDb9LImnxkAbxeBXA-gdH3xLiUglFvqZ2iPFwUE8ys>

Exciting New Course for our Youth: Starting from the 28th February Kamran is starting an 8 week Alpha Course on Christianity for our youth. Please let your young ones know about this so they can join up. They can attend in person or on-line by zoom. Please let Kamran know by getting in touch with him on Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk or by the church WhatsApp.



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

Toddler Group: The Toddler group is meeting this week. **We badly need more helpers for this group.** If you are willing to give some time to help between 9.30 and 11.30am on Tuesdays, please let Kamran know on Sunday or contact him on: Kamran@gg-pc.co.uk or the church WhatsApp.

Environmental tips from A Rocha: Each month A Rocha is sending churches and attached organisations tips to help make the environment more clean and safe. As we are approaching March, the tip they have sent us is below. Included is a repeat of the February tip encouraging families to participate in their Annual Carbon Fast.

Litter clean up: relating to A Rocha's plea to take part in a "Litter Picking Clean Up", I don't know how much litter you have seen in our streets. There is so much. People seem to think it is perfectly alright to dump anything they don't want that is often hazardous and unhygienic, especially to people walking that they can trip or fall over. It is not possible for an individual to pick it up and often not safe but we can Report it to the council and is very easy to do so by going to The London Borough of Barnet's website <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/contact-council> and go to the Contact Page.

The Revd Dr Helen Paynter: The second article from Dr Paynter is printed below. Last week she wrote on how the bible is being "weaponized" by individuals and groups for their own divisive and political reasons. This is alarming, especially that many who talk publicly about it clearly have no knowledge of it at all, especially the New Testament, "The Magnificat" and/or "The Sermon on the Mount" and know little, if anything, about the life and teaching of Jesus and the kind of role model he was. They are blatantly using it against immigrants, asylum seekers and anyone who doesn't look, in their narrow terms, "British" and this is so very dangerous. This week she writes on "The Power of Biblical Translation" and how different biblical versions we have vary according to the ecclesial or political preferences of the group that commissioned it. This often comes a surprise to many readers, but she gives some compelling examples.

The Revd Dr Helen Paynter is Director of Theological Education, Tutor in Biblical Studies, and Executive Director of the Centre for the Study of Bible and Violence, for Bristol Baptist College. Her most recent book

is ***“Blessed are the Peacemakers: A biblical theology of human violence”***. She is also attached to St Paul’s Cathedral who published her writing in their newsletter.

Reading for Lent? I don’t know if the books suggested below by myself and Jenny are of interest to you, They are by noted and recommended authors, who will take you deeply into thought, asking questions and bring greater awareness and questioning. Also any poets or sonnets by Malcolm Guite would be good to read. Perhaps Audio books or Blogs are of more interest. If so, I would like to recommend a BBC Radio 4 Blog recorded by Professor John Barton, who is a noted scholar, priest and Theologian, whose most famous book is, “The History of the Bible”. The BBC has recorded an omnibus edition of five of his broadcasts on “The History of the Bible”. It is really worth listening to. It can be found on: BBC Sounds <https://share.google/5hBd0Nin3lYaF0mfo>

If you have any books you would like to recommend, please let me know and I will keep adding them to the list. If you would like to borrow any of them please ask me.

With love and good wishes- Sally



A Rocha - March Great Litter Picking Spring Clean.

Take part in a local litter pick or beach clean during The Great British Spring Clean (Friday 13-Sunday 29 March), the nation’s biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Litter picking benefits the environment by removing rubbish that can be hazardous for wildlife and helps bring people together. See if there’s a litter pick in your local area or consider organising your own - after church on Sunday or with a youth group for example. Pray for your local area as you do the litter pick and ask God for opportunities to share why you are doing it. Find out more and pledge to pick up a bag at keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean

A Lenten Carbon Fast

Climate Stewards, which is part of the [A Rocha](#) family, are encouraging all church goers to participate in their annual Carbon Fast. Taking place over the period of Lent this is a challenge to cut your carbon footprint and give more of your time and resources to God. Each week in Lent will have a different theme. Beginning on 18th February, you will receive a weekly email containing some key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint, and a reflection. It is not too late to sign up.

👉 [Sign up here](#)

The Power of Translation - part 2

By Dr Helen Paynter

Last week we discussed the censoring of Scripture in order to control others. This week we will consider how translations themselves can be made for ideological purposes.

The years between the publication of the Tyndale New Testament (1526) and the King James Bible (Authorised Version, 1611) saw a flurry of English Bibles, each with its own particular translational choices to reflect the ecclesial or political preferences of the group that commissioned it.

The Great Bible (1539) intentionally retranslated some of Tyndale's "low church" choices. The Geneva Bible of 1560 reversed some of these changes and removed sacramental language to suit the Calvinism of the Dissenters. (For example, in the Great Bible, Acts 1:20 refers to a "Bysshopyrcke". The Geneva Bible translates this as "charge", with the marginal gloss "office and ministry".) Many of these changes were reversed again in the Bishops' Bible (1568), which was authorised for pulpit use in the Church of England.

Some more contemporary examples could be offered. The English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV, 2001) is based on the Revised Standard Version (RSV) with reference to the original-language texts. It was published in 2001, to provide a very literal translation and resist certain liberalising (especially "feminist") moves in other translations. But it is interesting to note the changes that the ESV chose to make to its "starter-text".

Romans 16 contains some good examples. In the RSV Phoebe (v.1) is a "deaconess" (a position of some authority within the church). But the ESV opts for "servant", even though it retains the RSV's description of Epaphras as a "minister" (Col 1:7) for the masculine version of that word. And in verse 7, Junia is described by the RSV as "a man of note among the apostles". By the time the ESV was produced, it was clear that Junia is a female name, and the ESV described her as "well-known to the apostles".

It is important to note that no translation is free of bias, whether deliberate or not. But the manipulation of translations is one way to exercise control over others. It is something we need to be aware of.



Suggested Books for Lent

In last week's newsletter I offered some books you might be interested in reading for Lent. I asked if anyone had a favorite book they could recommend. In response Jenny sent her recommendations which I add to the ones already listed. I have also added a BBC Sounds Podcast as mentioned above of Professor John Barton's book, "The History of the Bible", <https://share.google/5hBd0Nin3lYaF0mfo>

Jenny's recommendations are:

'Failure': Bishop Emma Ineson (SPCK 2022). This is a really helpful and accessible Christian reflection on 'what Jesus says about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up'. It's so refreshing to read something that's so realistic without being at all judgemental.

'Saying Yes to Life': Ruth Valerio (SPCK, 2020). This is a thoughtful reflection on themes in Genesis 1, describing how they relate to environmental, ethical and social concerns that have a global impact, and suggesting how we as followers of Jesus might respond.

'The Heart's Time': Janet Morley (SPCK 2011). I keep coming back to this one. It's a wonderful collection of poems, not all written from a Christian perspective: there's one for each weekday of Lent, each accompanied by a short commentary. Do try it even if you don't think you enjoy poetry - you might be surprised!!



Former Suggestions:

Bewilderment: A Spiritual Guide by Robert Atwell former Bishop of Exeter – Canterbury Press

How we Learn to be Brave: Decisive Moments in Life and Faith by Mariann Edgar Budde Episcopal Bishop of Washington – AuthenticMedia.co.uk

I Julian by Claire Gilbert – Hodder and Stouton

Journalling the Psalms by Paula Gooder – Eden Christian Book Specialists

Listening to the Music of the Soul by Bishop Guli Franci-Dehqani – SPCK publishing

Women of Holy Week: An Easter journey in nine stories by Paula Gooder – Church House Publishing
(This one is great for younger readers)



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 send our love and prayers to Ruth, Thomas and Elizabeth and the rest of her family. Ruth is at the moment caring for her mother after the death of her father.

We pray for Anita who has been in hospital for an operation on her back. We pray for a complete recovery for her and send our love to her and Simon.

We pray for Daniel, for Keith, Relia and Myfanwy; for 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 to 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

Topic: Church Wardens' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8585545365?pwd=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0xDaDhY2paUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 554 5365

Passcode: J4FbKf

AV Desk: Contact details:

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