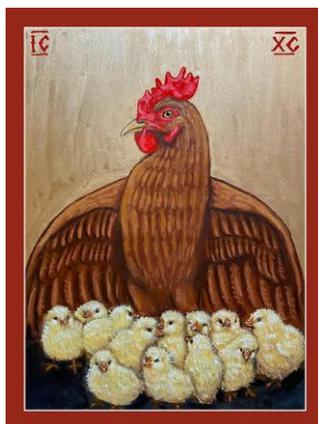


NEWSLETTER

19th March 2026



"As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you"
Isaiah 66:13

Dear Everyone - Greetings to you all

Mothering Sunday: What a joyous Mothering Sunday we had in church on Sunday, mostly arranged and led by the Sunday School. Each person present was given a heart on which to write the name of their mother or someone special who cared for them, with a message which was then hung on a tree and a candle lit. The story of Jochebed was told and her care of Moses, a brave, loving, trusting-in-God woman whose courage is often underplayed and name unknown. Each Sunday School member read a verse of their prayer for Mothering Sunday; A prayer they had composed together with help from Ifey and Modupe (See below). The prayer is moving and so full of what a mother is. Thank you Sunday School for the richness and thought you bring to us with your teachers. Thank you to Kelly, Poppy and Chinwe for making it all look so beautiful and ensuring everyone could take part.

During the Eucharist a group of our members from the Philippines sang a hymn of praise, in the Igorot dialect, of the Love of God, *"When we are in trouble he is always there to guide us"*. Thank you, Cynthia, Belem, Fely, Dalinda and Norah. We had flowers and - a creamy cake supplied by Festus to thank us for all we do – and – the cake was delicious!





Reflection for Lent by Maggi Dawn:



Below is a second article for Lent by The Revd Professor Maggie Dawn who is a priest in the Episcopal Church (USA) and a professor of theology, having taught at Cambridge and Durham in the UK, and Yale University in the USA. She is the author of five books, including **Giving It Up**, a series of daily readings from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Sermon for International Women's Day by the Bishop of Edmonton: Bishop Anderson is a globally recognised theologian and Bishop of Edmonton, committed to justice, inclusion, social transformation, and World Christianity. His sermon, preached on International Women's Day, but printed this week as last week's Newsletter was so full, packs no punches on how things are and need to change. He talks of a need for a

“Radical Gospel of Inclusion”, which is after-all what Jesus preached and demonstrated throughout his short life. Please read it in full as it needs a very wide readership. Thank goodness for bishops who speak their mind in support of the Gospel and for those who are so often demeaned and on the edge of the church and society.

Holy Week: Please note the dates of the services taking place in Holy Week. On Holy Thursday we are holding a joint Service with the South Asian and Ugandan churches that will be attended by The Bishop of Edmonton, The Rt Revd Anderson Jeremiah. The Service starts at 6.30pm. It will be so good to see everyone.



Listening and Learning, Bible Study: For Lent, Bible Study is taking 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=Iw9o8zKMnoUjEx2TwGmOlnwUm21F2V.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/81391462394/invitations?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.



Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM): This is an important meeting during which we go over all the events and happenings of the year. Reports are given, questions are asked and issues discussed. It is a time when church wardens are elected and members of the Church council too. Please put the date in your diaries and make a point of attending. **The date is: Sunday 10th May** after the morning service.

Coffee: As usual our coffee morning is from 10.30am-12noon. Do come and enjoy coffee, cake and a chat. This is followed by a short communion service at 12.noon.

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.

Articles, Thoughts, Poems, Reminiscences: As mentioned last week, when the newsletter was started it was at the beginning of Covid. Churches were closed and we could not get together. The purpose was to communicate to each other passing on our messages, tips, thoughts and comments saying how we were getting on. When Covid passed it was thought a good idea to continue with it having contributions from members of our congregation, with your thoughts, comments about issues you would like to share, your reminiscences, photographs, poems and/or books with our newsletter reflecting what you wanted to say. Keith read this and contributed his thoughts, on the newsletter. He said, *"I am happy how the newsletter is; I particularly enjoy the articles that are in it and come from a wide range of sources such as "St Paul's Cathedral", "The Church Times", The London Diocesan Letter" and other places of interest. They give us a wider view of the Church which many of us would not be aware of. They make you think and encourage discussions of other points-of-view"*. Thank you Keith. Other thoughts from you on anything would be welcome. It is your newsletter after all.

With love and good wishes- Sally



Sunday School Prayer for Mothering Sunday

Loving God

We thank you today for the gift of mothers
and for the many women who nurture, guide and care for others;

Thank you for mothers who showed us love,
who comforted us when we were hurt,
who encouraged us when we were afraid,
and who prayed for us through every stage of life;

We thank you for grandmothers, stepmother, foster mothers,
and for all women who have shared their wisdom, kindness and faith;
Lord we ask you to bless the mothers among us today.

Give them strength when they are tired,
peace when they are worried, and joy in the love they have given;

We also remember today those for whom this day is difficult.

Comfort those who have lost their mothers,
those who long to be mothers,
and those who carry the pain in their families;

Help us to honour the love and sacrifice of mothers
and to reflect your love in our homes and church family;

As you remind us in Isaiah 66:13,
“As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you”

May your comfort, grace and peace be with all of us today.
In Jesus’ name we pray.



Reflections for Lent from Maggi Dawn

'You feed them'

Luke 9:10-17

This weekend is the fourth Sunday in Lent. This was traditionally celebrated as 'Refreshment Sunday'. In the medieval world, all fasting was temporarily suspended, the streets came to life with mid-Lent fairs, as the Church celebrated the anniversary of one of the most famous feasts ever: the feeding of the 5,000.

Huge crowds followed Jesus into the wilderness and as the day wore on, they grew more hungry and tired by the hour. You can imagine the disciples' anxiety; along with their concern for the needs of thousands of hungry people, they must also have been aware they could have a crowd-control problem on their hands. So they turned to Jesus, doubtless hoping he would come up with an appropriate miracle. This was the man who had turned water into wine: surely a picnic in the desert wasn't beyond him! But intriguingly, his reply was, 'You feed them. You give them something to eat.'

Often in retelling this story we focus on how Jesus saved the day by blessing and multiplying the food – how he did perform the miracle they were hoping for! But pause for a moment and consider this detail: His message to the disciples – 'you feed them' – seems to draw them into the knowledge that they were not there merely to observe His ministry, but actively to become a part of it.

Teresa of Ávila famously wrote, 'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.' So, whenever we are concerned with the needs of the world, let's remember Jesus' words: 'You feed them.' All we have to do is make a start: that's when the miracles start to happen.



Jarius' Daughter Raised from the Dead
beaded art by Nigerian artist Lasisi Richard Olagunju

A sermon for International Women's Day 2026 by the Rt Revd Anderson Jeremiah, Bishop of Edmonton, on John 4:1–42.

Reflecting on Jesus and the Samaritan woman, it calls the Church to transgress boundaries, confront misogyny, and practice radical inclusion, justice, and grace. If there is a narrative that captures the heart of John's Gospel, it is the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. A story of transgression and transformation.

On this International Women's Day, when misogyny and sexism is making a glorious comeback thanks to toxic masculinity, we listen to this story not as a simple Sunday School moral lesson, but as a radical manifesto of inclusion. It is a story where religious, ethnic, and gendered boundaries are not just crossed, they are dismantled paving the way for a new liberated community.

To understand the weight of this meeting, we must understand the pollution of the landscape. The geography of contempt. The relationship between Jews and Samaritans in the first century was defined by deep-seated vitriol. The Samaritans claimed to be the true descendants of the Israelites, yet for the Jewish establishment, they were the 'other'-ritually impure and tainted, and physically polluting. The divide was so severe that ancient commentary noted: "He that eats the bread of the Samaritans is like to one that eats the flesh of a swine." What we see here wasn't just a theological disagreement; it was a systemic exclusion of tainted bodies and polluting culture. Jesus walks into it. No guiding principles or pastoral accommodation. Jesus simply transgressed the boundaries.

The historical and social reality is distilled into the very body of the woman Jesus meets by the well. The unnamed woman carried the weight of being 'the excluded polluting body.' For Jesus even to be seen with her could taint him, let alone talk. When the Holy Man Asks the Polluted Woman for Water Jesus asks for water, but the woman reminds him that he is trespassing, 'you are a Jew and you are asking for a drink from me, are you crazy?' He does not wait for the "impure" to clean herself; he enters her space. By asking for a drink, Jesus violates every religious, ethnic, and gender barrier of his time. Jesus redraws the lines of the social world. In this moment: the 'holy' man accepts water from the 'polluted' woman. The Sacred and Profane merge, walls crumble, hospitality replaces hostility. Truth be told, Jesus wasn't particularly nice to her in the beginning. However, Jesus engages theologically with this unnamed woman from Samaria about God, worship and salvation.

As the conversation progresses Jesus even offers a radical new idea that worship of God will not be limited to a particular community, or a place. In this dialogue, Jesus fundamentally shatters the idea of ‘chosen’ people. The Samaritan Woman Finds Her Voice This encounter wasn’t a one-way lecture. While Jesus leads her in confession, the tainted and polluting one unnamed woman steals the show. The Samaritan woman challenges the status quo. I like her sarcasm, where is the bucket? But more importantly she pushes the conversation toward the nature of worship, when her morality was questioned. She found her voice. She leads the conversation and ultimately includes Jesus into her excluded community.

Wil Gafney frames the Samaritan woman as a sharp, engaging theological interlocutor who holds her own in a conversation with Jesus. She challenges traditional, often male-dominated, interpretations that label the woman solely as a “sinner” or “promiscuous”. (Gafney, 2021). Consequently, her hospitality enables him to see beyond ritual hierarchy and tradition. Jesus speaks of the God of spirit and truth, who cannot be limited to a place or people. Jesus practices inclusion. Yes. But more poignantly the Samaritan woman, the excluded tainted one, demonstrates expansive inclusion. Crucially it is to this tainted polluted woman Jesus first reveals himself as the ‘messiah’. What a privilege.

The Samaritan woman does not remain a passive recipient of grace. She becomes the first testimony—the first apostle to her people. She brings her entire community to join hands with Jesus, breaking the barriers erected in the name of cultural purity. By accepting her as an equal, Jesus brings down the walls of separation. In the process, both are transformed. The invitation for us today is that we are invited to place ourselves into this story that we may invite the wider church and the world into God’s story of expensive grace and mercy.

Crossing Over to the Samaritans of Our Time My life is surrounded by women, my wife, my sisters, my daughters and my friends. The reality of theologically sanctified misogyny and sexual violence abounds in our midst. We continue to accommodate exclusion in the name of doctrinal orthodoxy. Women have been offering the costly inclusion, but how long the society and the church will continue to exploit and subordinate them?

Commenting on the intersection of gender and sexual violence within the church, Kelly Brown Douglas say that it is because they are all a part of white, patriarchal, imperialistic, capitalistic power. Heterosexism, homophobia, and misogyny feed this narrative and serve the white male agenda of oppressive power. (Douglas, 2021) Every person is sacred because every person manifests the glory of God. On the contrary Douglas says what we see in Jesus is that “Jesus let go of his privileges of Jewish maleness in order to show forth the full measure of God’s love. The church must follow in this regard. It must cross over to the Samaritans of our own times.”

The Samaritan woman demonstrates that it is through her theological agency which provides resilience to resist such oppressive systems and the resolve to confront stubborn and inherently violent systems of exclusion. John the Gospel writer makes it clear: because the Word became flesh in Jesus, the human person in their ‘unadorned humanity’ is now the location of the sacred. There are no longer ‘sacred’ or ‘profane’ people. Every person is sacred because every person manifests the glory of God.

I come from a people, the Dalits in India, who know what it means to be an untouchable and polluting community. We also know what welcoming Jesus into our midst could do in transforming our lives. Spirit and truth are not abstract concepts; they are witnessed in our bodies, our thoughts, and our actions. In this prophetic encounter between the unnamed Samaritan woman and Jesus a new vision of God is birthed, and a relationship reimagined, and then taken tangibly into communities that were historically excluded. May we, like Jesus leave our privileges behind, transgress the boundaries to transform lives. May we like the Samaritan woman, find our voice to confront theological certainties, invite the world to a table where no

one is excluded. Today when we partake in the reality of Christ, we partake in a love that seeks equality and justice everywhere. Amen.



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. It was so good to see Ruth back in church after her long stay in Wales caring for her mother.

We pray for Anita who is recovering after an operation on her back. We pray for a complete recovery for her and send our love to her and Simon.

We pray for Rose Ocwada, a former member of our congregation, now home in Kenya, whose cancer has returned that she may receive good treatment and be made well again.

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 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=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

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Warden on duty	Service leader	Preacher
22/03/26	Psalm 130 Romans 8:6-11	Sohail Dozie	Kai	Silvia	Nehar/ Nwadi	Ruth	Nehar/ Sohail		Jenny
29/03/26 Bring & Share	Psalm 118:1-2,19-29 Matthew 21:1-11	Sam Daniel	Jenny	Cynthia/ Chinwe	Tim/ Naila	Onyeka	Tony/Bilan		Rev Ibezim
05/04/26	Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-18	Nwenna ka Abi	Nwando	Alexis	Sally/ Tony	Daniel	Nehar/ Sohail		
12/04/26	Psalm 61 1 Peter 1:3-9	Cynthia Guy	Tony	Bilan	Daniel/ Ezim	Onyeka	Tony/Bilan		
19/04/26	Psalm 116:12-19 1 Peter 17-23	Conny Sim	Nehar	Christina	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Shaniv	Ifey/Shaniv		
26/04/26 Bring & Share	Psalm 23 1 Peter 2:19-25	Dozie Andrew	Rose	Cynthia/ Chinwe	Nehar/ Nwadi	Ruth	Nehar/ Sohail		