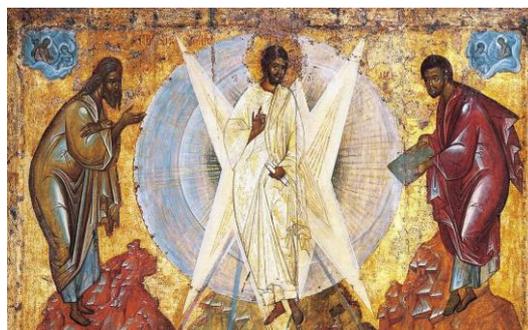


NEWSLETTER

5th March 2026



Dear Everyone - Greetings to you all

Transfiguration: In his second sermon on the Transfiguration Ibezim focused the importance of our spiritual growth. It is important to to grow close to God in humility, self-assessment, a sober reflection and a careful study of the Word. Transfiguration is a state of transformation, crossing from one nature to another, from darkness to light. He quoted Luke ch9 v 28-36. Lent is a period of when we put everything behind us and grow. At the Transfiguration Jesus was transformed by a shining light and was seen, by the appearance of Moses and Elijah, as the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets with God speaking of Jesus, “This is my beloved son, my chosen one”, commanding the disciples to listen to him. Ibezim urged us to find time to read our Bibles every day whenever we can.

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. Thank you for those who have offered thoughts. If you prefer you can send an email to the **Appointment Advisers**, who are: **Mr Jonathan Hellewell and Canon Stephen Knott** at: crownandlordchancellorpatronage@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Birthday Celebrations: Daniel told us that he was celebrating 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. Congratulations in advance Daniel and good wishes for a great day.



Nwanniker: We welcomed Nwaniker back after her holiday and were so pleased to congratulate her on being appointed as student librarian for her school. To add to this success, Queen Camilla paid a visit to the School to see the Library and Nwannika was introduced to her. Queen Camilla has a great interests in books, developng literacy and encouraging people to read, This was also on ITV news. We were all very proud of her.



Theo and Andrew: Two more of our church young people to be proud of. Theo and Andrew showed us their certificates awarded to them at their school. Andrew for producing quality work and Theo for improvement in maths. They are clearly going from strength to strength and we congratulate them.



Anita: After an operation on her back in the Royal Free Anita is now home but still not able to join us. She is making a slow recovery, cared for by Simon. We send her our love and prayers hoping that her pain eases and she makes a good recovery.

Prayer for Iran: Below is a prayer sent by Bishop Guli of Chelmsford, who is herself Iranian and was a refugee with her family from the country after the murder of her young brother in 1980. She has a real understanding of the pain of being caught up in a revolution and having to escape quickly. Her recent book, **“Listening to the Music of the Soul”** is on our Lent reading list. I have a spare copy for anyone interested in borrowing it.

Mariann Edgar Budde on Mercy: The Bishop of Washington has been, aptly at this time, reflecting on “Mercy”; how for Christians Mercy is not an option as Jesus Christ’s life and work was based on mercy which is God’s very nature; through God’s relationship with us, we experience as unmerited grace. Through mercy, we see that God is more concerned with human wholeness than with retribution. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves. Something we need across the whole world at this time.

World Day of Prayer: Please come to the “World Day of Prayer” that is taking place tomorrow, **6th March at 2.00pm in our church.** The service has been created by the women of Nigeria. It is so appropriate it is held in our Church with many Members from different parts of Nigeria who will be wearing their traditional dress and contribute some Nigerian dishes. Rose, who is on the committee, is hoping that as many of our congregation who are free will be able to come. 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 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=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/81391462394/invitations?signature=9LDb9LImnxkAbxeBXA-gdH3xLiUgIFvqZ2iPFwUE8ys>

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.

Environmental tips from A Rocha: For the month of March: A Rocha has sent us another tip for this month to make the environment more clean and safe. The tip they have sent us is below.

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 has been a great deal of publicity about it in the media and especially on TV. People seem to think it is perfectly alright to dump anything they don't want which is often hazardous and unhygienic, especially to people walking that they can trip over it. It is not possible for an individual to pick it up and often not safe but we can report it to the council. It 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.



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.

Articles, Thoughts, Poems, Reminiscences: When the newsletter was started it was at the beginning of Covid. Churches were closed and we could not get together as we usually did. The purpose of it 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, then, 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 - anything you would like to share.

I would be very grateful if you could think about this as it is your newsletter. While it is good to include news and information on a wider scale from across the diocese, other church matters, views of writers and bishops in this country and overseas, to widen our perspectives, it is most important to hear from you. We are such a richly diverse congregation; it would be great if our newsletter reflected this. Please give it a thought or discuss with me how you would like the newsletter to be and if you would like it to continue as it is. I would appreciate your views.

With love and good wishes- Sally



 **A PRAYER FOR IRAN** 

BY THE RT REVD DR GULI FRANCIS-DEHOANI,
BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD

Ever loving God,
who hears us in our anguish and distress,
and longs for us to be free.
We pray for the people of Iran
and the wider Middle East,
at this time of fear and uncertainty.
Be near to those who are anxious;
bring comfort to all who are suffering.
Guide those with the power to make decisions,
and lead them in the ways of wisdom,
compassion and moderation:
that people of good will would seek
harmony and reconciliation.
Join us with our Christian brothers
and sisters in all places,
in praying for peace with justice,
through him who is the prince of peace,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Mariann Edgar Budde on Mercy

“I’ve been reflecting recently on the politics of mercy, in the broadest sense, as in Aristotle’s understanding of politics as our shared moral responsibility of tending to our common life for the common good. Weaving through biblical texts is a similar sense of responsibility to care for our common life. And at the heart of the biblical witness—and certainly of the life and teachings of Jesus—is mercy.

For Christians, mercy is not optional. It reveals God’s very nature and God’s relationship with us, which we experience as unmerited grace. Through mercy, we come to trust that God is more concerned with human wholeness than with retribution.

Nor is mercy optional in our relationships with one another. We are to be merciful as God is merciful. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves.

There is an unmistakable power dynamic in mercy; those on the receiving end are the more vulnerable. That's true in our relationship with God, and it's true in our relationships with one another. Human power dynamics, however, can shift. Over time, those who receive mercy may find themselves called upon to extend it, and vice versa.

Mercy doesn't erase accountability, but it does make room for our humanity. It is a discipline that requires self-awareness, proximity, and restraint. For Christians, the question is not whether mercy belongs in public life, but whether we have the imagination and courage to practice it in whatever realm we find ourselves in—not for ourselves, but for the common good.

May we remember that mercy others need is also what we ourselves long for, and that we all stand equidistant under the mercy of God”.

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](https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean)



Suggested Books for Lent

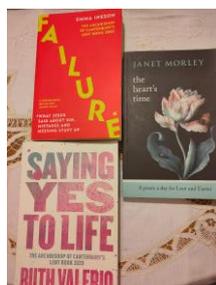
In last week's newsletter I offered some books you might be interested in reading for Lent. I asked if anyone had a favorite book they could recommend. In response Jenny sent her recommendations which I add to the ones already listed. I have also added a BBC Sounds Podcast as mentioned above of Professor 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=em85aDF5ZmJ5ZkVlb0x0aDhY2paUT09>

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
08/03/26	Psalm 95 Romans 5:1-11	Andrew Abi	Alexis	Nora	Daniel/ Ezim	Onyeka	Tony/ Bilan		Rev Kamran
15/03/26	Psalm 45:10-17 Ephesians 5:8-14	Keith Elizabeth	Simon	Naila	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Shaniv	Ifey/ Shaniv	Jenny	Rev Ibezim
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	TBC	Nwennaka Abi	Nwando	Alexis	Sally/ Tony	Daniel	Nehar /Sohail		
12/04/26	TBC	Cynthia Guy	Tony	Bilan	Daniel/ Ezim	Onyeka	Tony /Bilan		
19/04/26	TBC	Conny Sim	Nehar	Christina	Ifeyinwe/ Onyeka	Shaniv	Ifey/ Shaniv		
26/04/26 Bring & Share	TBC	Dozie Andrew	Rose	Cynthia/ Chinwe	Nehar/ Nwadi	Ruth	Nehar/ Sohail		