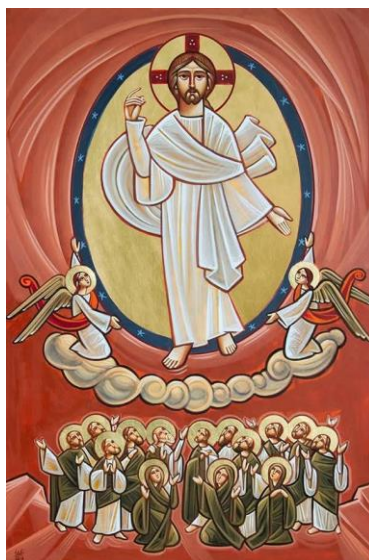


# NEWSLETTER

21<sup>st</sup> May 2026



*The icon is from a Coptic Orthodox church in Canada.*

## Dear Everyone - Greetings to you all

**Ascension Sunday:** *"As they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight." The cloud is the sign of the presence of the power and the glory of God - the circle is complete, heaven and earth are restored in Christ. With the apostles are the women - Mary the Mother of Jesus, and perhaps Mary of Bethany and Martha? And Jesus is 'at large in the world'".*

In his sermon on Sunday, Kamran talked of the space between Ascension time and Pentecost and his preparing the disciples for the coming of the `Holy Spirit.

It was 40 days since the disciples had seen their risen Lord and he had begun to prepare them for having him taken from their sight. Kamran asked, "what does this for us?"

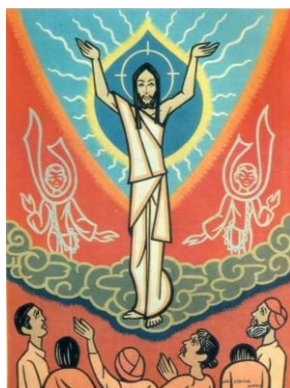
### **He gave us points to think about.**

**One** – This particular in-between time changes how we relate to Jesus. Before the Ascension the disciples travelled with Jesus, Jesus was in their sight. After the Ascension relationships changed, a shift took place; afterwards they were travelling by faith as we are. It challenges us to go out into the world. His earthly ministry became our Advocate in heaven, Hebrews ch4 v 14. *"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need".*

So when we pray we do not do so in emptiness but to God with Jesus advocating on our behalf; Romans ch 8 v34, *“Who then will condemn us? No-one for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honour at God’s right hand, pleading for us”*

**Two** – Pentecost fulfills the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit, John 16 v7, *“But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you”*. The Holy Spirit is present everywhere. The Church is built on the power of the Holy Spirit who comes to renew our hearts.

**Three** – The Ascension sends us into the world. Before Pentecost the disciples are frightened and uncertain; after Pentecost they are teaching, healing and proclaiming. Kamran asked us, *“How can we be the wholeness of the ascended lord, who died rose and will come back to us again?”* We can do do the work of Christ because we have been given the Holy Spirit. Christ gives his spirit to us. The disciples thought they were losing him but received him in a deeper way as we do. We ask for courage where we are fearful and uncertain.



*The Ascension by Sr. Claire SMMI (India.)*

**Nwando:** To let you know that Nwnado’s funeral will be in church on **Friday May 29<sup>th</sup>** at 11.30am **(The time will be confirmed on WhatsApp)**

**Greetings to our new Church Wardens:** On Sunday morning, during the service, we welcomed our new churchwardens, Ifey and Shaniv. We wished them well in their new responsibilities and assured them of our support in all they have to undertake. They have been shadowing Tony and Nehar for some time to find out what being a churchwarden entails. Much appreciation was given to Tony for all his expertise, time and patience he has given over the past 6 years and to Nehar too for the work she has given on the pastoral side especially with the Night sleepers project.



**A Message from the Archbishop of Canterbury.** “A Million Acts of Hope”. This is a week of action taking place from **13–20 May**. Hundreds of charities, communities and faith groups have come together to launch A Million Acts of Hope - a campaign to bring hope out into the open. A Million Acts of Hope is a national invitation to celebrate the everyday acts of kindness, care and connection happening across the UK. At a time when division can feel loud, we want to bring together all these everyday acts of hope and shine a light on the people and communities making them happen

Archbishop Sarah says,

“It can sometimes feel as though division and discouragement dominate the headlines. But when I spend time in churches and communities across the country, I see another story too. I see people caring for neighbours, supporting food banks, coaching children, checking in on those who are lonely, and working together to make their communities kinder and safer.

These acts of hope happen all the time, yet so often they go unseen.

That’s why I’m pleased to support **A Million Acts of Hope** - a week of action taking place from 13–20 May, bringing together charities, faith groups and communities across the UK to celebrate the hope already present among us.

Hope is something we choose - and something we build together”.

A link to the week is <https://millionactsofhope.org/about>

**Have you got some experiences you have had that give you hope? Do share them and I can put them in the newsletter.**

**St Paul’s Cathedral Newsletter to London Churches: Reflections for May from Patrick Craig.**

Below Patrick Craig gives his third reflection on the many brilliant hymns and music that, to him, express the love of God and our faith. This week he talks about the Alleluia songs after Ascension, especially Patrick Gowers’, “**Viri Galilei**”, which features two angel tenor and bass soloists.

He talks of how the slow climb to the top of the music is a series of distant Alleluias that remind us that Christ is risen and out there, led by a lone trumpeter in the front seat. **God is**

*gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.* (You can hear, *Viri Galilei*", by Googling it. It is stunningly beautiful).



**What are your Favourite Hymns?:** Knowing how many of you love hymns and have your favourites, I asked if you could let me know what your favourite hymns or pieces of music are. This week, Rose, Kamran and Keith offered some of their favourites. These are from:

**Rose:** "I need thee Every Hour"; "Great is thy Faithfulness", "Amazing Grace".

**Kamran:** "I Stand Amazed in the Presence".

**Keith:** "To be a Pilgrim"; "Lord the Light of your Love is Shining".

**Can you add to these?**

**Listening and Learning, Bible Study:** The Bible Study will continue to take place each Thursday at 7.00pm pm. 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-gdH3xLiUqIFvqZ2iPFwUE8ys>

**Church Prayer Group:** Ibezim is starting a church prayer group that will be taking place every Wednesday at 7.00-7.45pm, starting from the 27<sup>th</sup> May. The aims are, "to pray for:

the Church; our members; ourselves; encouraging of communal prayer; building ourselves spiritually. Jesus told his disciples, Luke 18, "They should always pray and not give up".

This will be open to all.

**Coffee:** This enjoyable time takes place each Wednesday from 10.30am – 12 noon when we then have a short communion service. Everyone is welcome – cakes and conversation.

**Toddler Group:** The Toddler group will be closed for half-term holidays and will reopen Tuesday 02<sup>nd</sup> June.

**Magnolia Court Care Home Meeting:** On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May I went along to the Magnolia Court Care Home, 181 Granville Road, NW2 2LH. to a session on "**Care Fees: A Planning Evening**". It was run by a local Care Fees Planning Specialist who gave advice on drawing up, Wills, Powers of Attorney, Inheritance Tax, Trust Planning, planning for the next stage of our lives and so much more. This session was highly informative and helpful. I learnt much about what needs to be done and the pit-falls involved in mistaken or misunderstood planning.

**Rabeya**, who gave the talk, is a highly qualified financial planner of many years standing. She is a fully accredited member of the Society of Later Life Advisers.

I thought this is something that would be helpful for all of us whatever age we are.

Rabeya, offered to come to us at our church and take a session for us. I heartily recommend that we take up her kind offer. I am arranging a date and time with her

Please indicate to me on WhatsApp, or in-person, if this is something you would be interested in. We are going to open up the session to other local churches who might like to join us.

**A Friday Fish and Chip Lunch:** Sarah Pratt, the Home Services Advisor at Magnolia Court Care Home, has also invited us to a **Fish and Chip Lunch at 1.00pm on any Friday we are interested in**. If you would like to come they can take up to 12 guests. If we look at our diaries and agree a Friday date we could all go together and enjoy the chip lunch. Please let me know if you are interested by WhatsApp or email me on: [sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com](mailto:sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com)

**Please note three dates for your diaries:**

**Sheila Grodzinski's Thanksgiving Service.** This will take place during the Sunday Service at **10.00am on 31<sup>st</sup> May**. Sheila's family will be present and it will be a fitting memorial for her and a remembrance of her long and faithful service to this church and other support she gave in the community. Please do come and support Sheila's family and give thanks for all she did for so many. She was such an amazing support in our church for many years.

**Festival Day at St Alban's Cathedral for St Alban:** This will take place on St Alban's Day **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June**. Several people went last year and thoroughly enjoyed it. If we have enough lifts by car that will be great but, if a large number would like to come, Kamran will order a coach. If you would like to go please sign up as soon as possible and let Kamran know.

**Donald Barnes Memorial Lecture:** Please put **Tuesday 20 October at St Peter's Church, Belsize Square NW3 4HJ at 6.30pm** in your diaries. You are invited to this year's Memorial address. It will be given by, Dr Claire Gilbert, Visiting Professor at King's College London and Lay Canon at Norwich Cathedral. Claire has agreed to give the lecture on a theme based around Julian of Norwich and ecological consciousness. Such an apt subject for our time. Claire is the author of the recent book *I Julian* (acclaimed by Rowan Williams among others). Those of us who are members of the Nazareth Community studied it last year with great enjoyment and learnt so much about Julian's life and theology.

Copies of *I Julian* will be ordered from Daunt's and will be available on the night.

**Our Bishop Jeremiah Anderson:** You might like to see this photograph of our Bishop Jeremiah Anderson, who went to London last Saturday to meet the marchers of "Unite the Kingdom" rally. Which considering their attitude towards anyone they consider not British, i.e. Not white, was a courageous thing to do. This led to the comment from someone who was there and witnessed his offer of friendship and took the picture, saying, "Are all Bishops this

amazing?! Street pastoring at the “Unite the Kingdom” rally with Bishop Jeremiah who gladly chatted about Spurs with those who’d been to the far right rally....”.

I wonder if perhaps he made a difference to those he talked to and made them think. Much admiration and thanks to you Bishop Anderson.



**With love and good wishes – Sally**



## Patrick Craig St Paul's Singer: His Favourite Music - part 3

### Alleluia Songs – Sunday after Ascension



It's always a wake up call when two angels appear together in the Bible. We had two in dazzling clothes at the empty tomb on Easter morning. We'll not mention the two it took to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. At Evensong on the Sunday after Ascension you can guarantee you'll hear in St Paul's my favourite modern choral banger - Patrick Gowers' *Viri Galilei* featuring two angel tenor and bass soloists.

This is the most thrilling piece to sing. Scored for at least eighteen individual voice parts and an organ duet (yes - two players sharing the same stool!), it's the musical equivalent of a rollercoaster ride. The slow climb to the top is a series of distant Alleluias that remind us that Christ is risen and out there, led by a lone trumpeter in the front seat. ***God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.*** Then we tell the wonderful story of the disciples getting an education from two angels as to what on earth (and in heaven!) is going on! ***Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?*** Finally, via an organ glissando, Jesus rides into heaven on his chariot and we get a thrilling musical interpretation of angels on wheels using one of those great Victorian hymns to power themselves skywards. ***Riding on the clouds his chariot To his heavenly palace gate.*** The piece was written for the consecration of Richard Harries as Bishop of Oxford on Ascension Day 1987 in St Paul's Cathedral. This inspiring and generous man of God died recently. Both he and the composer Patrick Gowers would have been ninety this month. Two big-brained angels peering down from heaven, encouraging us to see that at the Ascension, Jesus is released from the bounds of time and space, and is finally able to shower his love on all of us. If you find yourself gazing up to heaven, wondering where God is, know that he has already found you.



## 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.

Please pray for Festus who is home after having been in hospital for a second operation on his knee. We do hope he makes a good recovery and is back with us soon

We pray for Anita that she is sustained with God's Love and our prayers. We pray for Simon and the care he gives her.

We pray for Daniel, for Keith, Myfanwy; for Chuba Agbim, for Eunice Adiele, recovering from an eye operation, for Gideon Onwutalu, Sir Edmund Onochie. 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. We especially think of Nwando who died after being ill for a few weeks. She is a great loss to us who loved her. We pray specially for her family in their grief and all of her friends who feel her loss keenly.

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](http://www.gg-pc.co.uk)

Date	Bible Passage	Readers	Intercessor	Refreshments	Eucharistic Minister	AV Desk	Warden on duty	Service leader	Preacher
24/05/26 <a href="#">Day of Pentecost</a>	Psalm 104:24-34,35b	Conny	Nehar	Alexis	Ifeyinwe	Onyeka	Tony	Jenny	Rev Kamran
	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13	Sim			Onyeka		Bilan		
	John 20:19-23								
31/05/26 <a href="#">Trinity Sunday</a> <b>Bring &amp; Share</b>	Psalm 8	Keith		Cynthia	Nehar	Ruth	Ifey	TBC	Rev Kamran
	2 Corinthians 13:11-13	Elizabeth		Chinwe	Nwadi		Shaniv		
	Matthew 8:16-20								