

# STAMP

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ISSUE 64



THE PARISH OF ST MARY & ST PAUL  
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

£1

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Cover Picture:  
*The Annunciation* by El Greco.  
Museo del Prado, Madrid

The angel Gabriel is perhaps most famously known for the Annunciation, as described in the Gospel of Luke. In this event, Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary to inform her that she would conceive and bear a son, Jesus, who would be the Son of God. He also visits Mary's fiancé Joseph to explain the name, "because he will save his people from their sins".

Announcing the conception of John the Baptist, Gabriel appears to Zechariah to tell him that his wife Elizabeth will have a son.

In Christian art and iconography, Gabriel is often depicted carrying a lily, which is his attribute, a trumpet and sometimes a scroll. He is typically shown as a serene and radiant figure, symbolising his role as a messenger of divine grace.

Gabriel is one of only two angels explicitly named in the Protestant Bible. He is a figure in Christianity and Judaism. In Judaism, he is a warrior angel for God's causes and a helper to Daniel.

Gabriel's role as a divine messenger highlights his importance in conveying God's plans and messages to humanity. His appearances are moments of profound revelation and divine intervention in the Christian narrative.

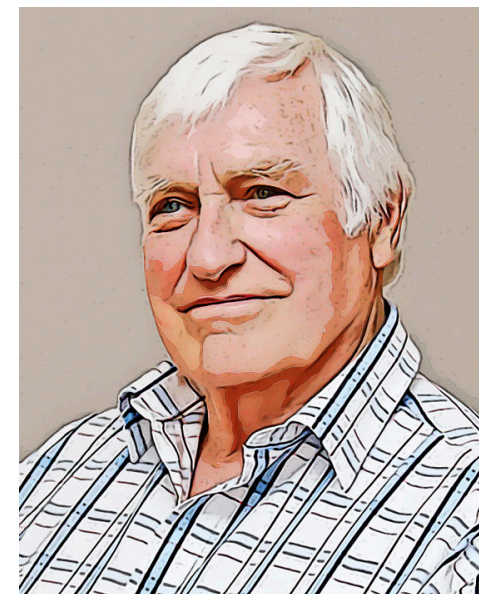
## From the Editor

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Members of the Holy Spirit Zimbabwean at a recent Retreat up the hill at St Paul's Highfield commented in a highly favourable way about our facilities. Certainly, we have come a long way over the past decade with new windows and doors, new toilets, a refurbished and refurnished Parish Room Hall carpeting and Wifi, and in the church a magnificent backcloth to the altar, a sound system and a large screen for presentations. Outside has improved also but work continues there to try to make us as spick and span outside as we are inside.

Down the hill at St Mary's there has been significant work over the last half century, early on especially the re-leading of the spire and recently the great improvements both to the church and the hall. People enter St Mary's increasingly who have not been there before and, marvelling at its beauty and grandeur, are delighted also to find modern amenities now, such as the kitchen and the toilet. The days of trekking from church to hall for example for an interval loo break are behind us now.

All this investment of money and people's time is paying off as more people and bodies are attracted to hire our space and to attend our events.



We are very sound financially compared with many churches. One of the reasons are the hiring fees, which in 2024 will be circa 30% of our income. I do not think that we would be where we are financially if the investment had not happened to the extent that it has.

This is an encouraging background as we face some further transformation in St Mary's which will make it more practical as a place for worship and community social events.

## SPECIAL FEATURE - CONFIRMATION AT ST MARY'S

On Sunday, the 24th of November 2024 the Church universal celebrated Christ the King and on this feast we were fortunate enough at St Mary's to end the liturgical year on a high note with a lovely service of Confirmation.

The Right Reverend Rob Wickham, Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of St Albans, and Group Chief Executive Officer of the Church Urban Fund, came along to confirm our six candidates. Bishop Rob is well known to us for his visit to open the beer festival in July and it was wonderful to welcome him back.

Our six Confirmation candidates: Robyn, Phoebe, Layla-Marie, Matthew, Emerson, and Joshua, had attended six evening training sessions when we looked at various aspects of the faith in preparation for their Confirmation. When Bishop Rob arrived at church on the morning of the 24th, he spent some time alone with the six candidates in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit talking to them about their journey to Confirmation. This was a great way to start the day.

This special Sunday also saw the official robed debut of our new serving team in their bright, new albs. Philip, James and Elizabeth Barber acted as crucifer and acolytes and Susie Bond was the Bishop's chaplain, Mark Russell was Virger and I acted as deacon.



The service of Confirmation within Holy Communion is one of the most powerful and symbolic of Christian services.

Firstly, as always, we had the Liturgy of the Word and a sermon from the Bishop.

After that the candidates declared their intention to be confirmed and we proceeded to the font for their renewal of baptismal vows shared by the whole congregation. For this Bishop Rob used a huge branch of rosemary to sprinkle the candidates and many in the congregation as well!



Once we all returned to the front of Church, Bishop Rob confirmed each candidate individually and anointed them with oil.

The bishop said:

‘God has called you by name and made you his own.’

He then laid his hand on the head of each saying:

‘Confirm, O Lord, your servant (here he named the candidate) with your Holy Spirit. Amen.’

He then anointed them with Chrism saying:

‘Be sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.’

After each candidate has been individually prayed for in this way by the Bishop he prayed for them all saying:

‘Defend, O Lord, these your servants with your heavenly grace, that they may continue yours forever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more until they come to your everlasting kingdom. Amen.’

The service of Holy Communion now continued with the Liturgy of the Sacrament and the candidates came up first to receive the body and blood of Christ along with their families and supporters.



After this, at the end of the service, they were presented with a candle taken from the Paschal Candle which burns by the font. The newly Confirmed then led everyone out of Church to continue the celebration firstly at the back of the church and then for a lovely lunch in the hall joined by their families and as many of the congregation who could stay.



This Sacrament of the Church allowed us to celebrate with six faithful people - of varying age and experience - who came together to declare their faith in God in the midst of his congregation. The wonderful thing about this particular service was that all the people Confirmed have been regular attenders and contributors to the life of our parish and church for some years. Welcoming them in this way was a true privilege for all of us involved.

The Parish presented each of the newly Confirmed with a Bible and they took their candles home to relight on special occasions. A wonderful celebration came to a lovely conclusion.

Our thanks to everyone who helped make the day so special and who contributed to the service and the refreshments that followed.

Please do pray for those who were Confirmed as they continue their journey amongst us as pilgrims and followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Canon John*

What an uplifting and joyous service it was - I particularly enjoyed seeing the Crucifer and Acolytes robed up again. If you weren't able to be there, you can watch it on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/KbyYx4oDxOY?si=yrWXJggYZSqzT4go>

*Jeff W*

It certainly was a very beautiful and memorable service. How lovely to see so many young people, (I am including you in that Robyn), confirming their Christian faith.

*Lynne S*

Congratulations to all those confirmed today

*Jelena C*

Great photo memories of a very special confirmation day 😊

Thank you also to all the people who gave food contributions and to my catering team for making our spectacular lunch a truly family affair. Thank you all 🍕

*Sheila B*

Thank you and your fantastic team Sheila xx You are so right there, today really was a family affair. Thank you all xx

*Rochelle*

Yes, a very moving and joyous occasion. Followed by a delicious lunch. Thank you everyone.

*Emmeline L* 🌞🎉

*Congratulations to all of you. A very special day - lovely photos*

*Brian D*

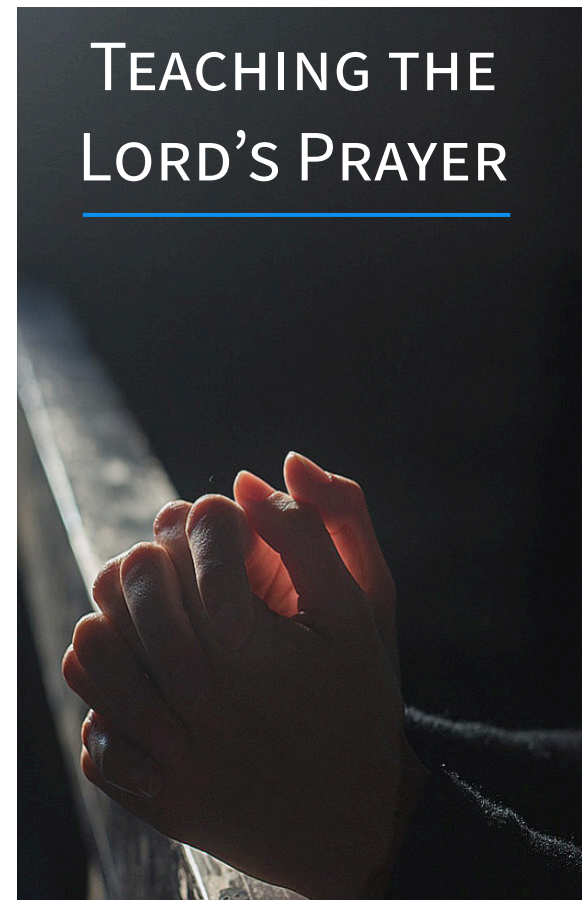
The Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell plans to teach the Lord's Prayer across the North of England throughout 2025, a priority of his vision for Faith in the North.

Archbishop Stephen is to visit dioceses in the Northern Province of the C of E where he will be sharing the relevance of the Lord's Prayer to our world today, encouraging people to pray and live by this, as part of their missionary discipleship.

Archbishop Stephen is encouraging prayer, storytelling and church planting inspired by the Northern Saints such as Hild, Cuthbert, Bede and Paulinus. The aim is to foster deeper connections

with the Christian faith across the north and renew the Church's missionary purpose to share God's love with all.

Archbishop Stephen said "In less than 70 words, Jesus gives us a prayer to learn by heart and a prayer that gets inside our hearts, shaping the way we live. The Lord's Prayer surely is the best place to start. It is said in just about every church service, from the coronation of the King to the christening of a child. It's a challenging prayer and when we say this prayer together, we become part of God's movement of change, of bringing God's heaven to earth. It teaches us how to pray. But it also teaches us how to live".



## ST MARY AND ST PAUL

### REACHING VERY DISTANT PARTS OF THE WORLD

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#### Art in the Nave to the Langa Pre-School Trust

LTPT has continued to be a recipient of an annual donation from the Parish, arising from the August Bank Holiday Art in The Nave Exhibition.

The donation of £1,000 this year is dedicated to help support the cost of 2024 Christmastime gift of food vouchers for pre-schools and nurseries benefitting 3,000 children.



#### The Holy Spirit Mission, Zimbabwe



Parishioners in St Mary's and St Paul's Churches will know about the wonderful work over a long period of one of our congregation, Sister Patricia originally from Zimbabwe. Part of her life's mission has been to help raise funds to support the establishment of a monastery and associated community centre in Zimbabwe. Now after several years of planning and extensive building work the Holy Spirit Monastery is nearing completion. Our Parish wanted to make a contribution and £460 was raised, which was used to purchase and install a 200 litre solar geyser.

Dear Father John & The Parish PCC

This comes as word of gratitude from all the sisters and brothers, towards the donation that you gave to the Holy Spirit Monastery, for our building project. Please find attached all the updates and evidence of how the money was sent via the safest way, the acknowledgement receipt by the Community, and receipts of what /where it was spent on. We are forever grateful for the help, and wish you all well. Grace and peace from God Our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

*Friar Joshua HSM*

## ST MARY'S PEW REMOVAL

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In 2024 the PCC on both 9 September and 18 November expressed its determination to proceed with the removal of pews at the side of the North Aisle and from the front of the nave. These decisions confirm what was started two years ago following the completion of the work to bring kitchen and toilet facilities into St Mary's. The removal of the North Aisle pews, with a later decision to extend the project to include the pews at the front of the nave were seen to enable easier movement both for the congregation and the public. Not only the regular eucharistic services, but especially funerals, weddings and baptisms would benefit from the work in the front of the nave. Along the North Aisle the wider space would provide benefits for us and the public in our increasing use of the nave as St Mary's becomes a more integrated part of the High Street rather than being an outlier to it.

This ambitious scheme would take time and be costly. We were able to consider it seriously because of the very generous donation of £28,000 by Jenny Bowes for the North Aisle project. However, over the months of consultation and planning, the pews at the front of the nave having been added to the project, the cost had risen to £60,000.

The question arose about which work should we complete, the North Aisle or the front of the nave. Early this year the Parish heard that a legacy for St Mary's had been left by Audrey Lilian Batchelor to be spent at the discretion of the Vicar and Wardens of St Mary's. They decided that, subject to the support of the PCC this legacy, which we have just heard amounts to £30,500, should be used to support the pew removal project.

The unanimous and momentous decision of the PCC on the subject on 18 November 2024 is recorded as follows, 'concerning the whole pew project, it should proceed subject to confirmation that the quotation is still valid and that the work can be completed by the end of March 2025 and that the PCC is approached to give final approval on this basis.

GG 24/11/2024

# CONCERT FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

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A special Charity concert on behalf of the Sunflower project for Ukrainian refugees was held on Friday evening 18th October at Saint Mary's Church.

The concert featured Oksana Hermanchuk, a gifted concert pianist who had fled from Kiev at the start of the Russia Ukraine war and who now lives with a friend in Kings Langley.

Oksana delighted her audience through her music and her artistry in a wonderful programme of classical pieces for piano. It was clear from the first few opening bars of J.S. Bach's Prelude No1 that those present were in for a real treat as Oksana demonstrated both technical skill and emotional depth, showcasing the flowing and harmonious progression of the piece.

The entire concert was performed under soft lighting augmented by the addition of candlelight placed around the piano that created a wonderfully relaxed and serene ambience.

The programme continued with a dramatic rendition of W.A. Mozart's Fantasia followed by the Adagio from the Pathétique Sonata by L. Van Beethoven and perhaps most notably the intensely personal, Poem by the Czech composer Zdeněk Fibich. This led to a delightful selection by Franz Liszt, Claude Debussy and Frederick Chopin's waltz's No 5 and 6. The latter, also known as the minute waltz - one of the most famous and technically challenging works concluded the first half of the evening's programme.

After a short interlude Oksana played Benedictus by Karl Jenkins more often heard perhaps as a well-known piece of choral music that is part of his larger work "The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace reflecting on the theme of peace and the horrors of war. Next the Passacaglia by Johan Halvorsen, before moving to a very different and equally entertaining change of playing style and musical genre. Beginning with a timeless classic A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square composed by Manning Sherwin The song, written in 1940, during the early years of World War II. Next we heard a rendition of Dreamland, a beautiful piece by the contemporary British classical-soul composer and musician Alexis Ffrench.

Oksana was joined on stage by the guitarist Peter Lennon and the audience



was treated to duets for piano and guitar. Peter's lead guitar solo on Let it be by Paul McCartney was a delight. Peter and his wife Pam served as organisers for the evenings charity fundraising concert.

The Final part of the programme took on a distinctly Ukrainian theme, beginning with Melody in A minor by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk.

Oksana invited her friend Alla Kravchuk to share the stage. Anna sang beautifully with a selection of songs including Ya Pidu v daleki hory (I will go to the distant mountains), a song that seems to have become emblematic of Ukrainian folk culture and identity, especially tied to resilience and enduring love for the land. Finishing with traditional folk songs Sila Praha and Po sadochku hodzhu kolomyka.

This was a very special concert in many ways. A fundraising charity concert in support of Ukrainian refugees. A moving celebration of classical and modern music lovingly rendered at the piano by Oksana Hermanchuk, supported by Peter Lennon on guitar and vocalist Alla Kravchuk. It was also a reminder of the beautiful setting of Saint Mary's Church, Hemel Hempstead and its suitability as a glorious venue for concerts such as the one enjoyed by those who attended on the 18th October.

*Brian Doran*



Details of another local concert by Oksana Hermanchuk in aid of Ukrainian refugees:

**Christmas Piano Concert**  
at  
**St Bartholomews Church,  
Wigginton, Tring HP23**



on  
**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024  
from 7.30pm to 10.00pm**

Featuring a selection of classical;  
jazz, modern, Ukrainian, and christmas music



by **Oksana Hermanchuk**

Tickets £15.00 \* Interval drinks  
Reserve your tickets  
email: [revmike1@outlook.com](mailto:revmike1@outlook.com)  
or phone: 01442-823273

Oksana Hermanchuk's website:  
<https://oksanahermanchuk.uk>

## CUMBRIAN AND BORDER THOUGHTS

In the context of this edition's front cover design by Jeff Wallis, and my background as a Cumbrian with roots both sides of the border, you may be interested in a couple of Scots Border tales.

### Archangel Gabriel approaches God

*Archangel Gabriel asks God*

'Holy Father, I have been travelling and have a question to ask you'

*God to Archangel Gabriel*

'You are my most important messenger, what is the question?'

*Archangel Gabriel*

'I have been to Scotland. It is like a paradise: beautiful scenery, mountains, moors, meadows, rivers and lochs, land teeming with game and rivers and seas full of fish, and it has very busy and contented people. Why have you given them such perfection?'

*God to Archangel Gabriel*

'Yes, it is true what you say, but have you seen the neighbour to the South that I have given them to deal with?'

### Carlisle's Town Hall Clock

The current Carlisle Town Hall was completed in 1669 on the site of the ancient 'Moot Hall' going back to 1345. It was extended in 1717 to include a clock tower. Remember that there was the Act of Union between England and Scotland in 1707, followed by two Jacobite invasions across the border in that century, 'the '15 and the '45'.

Back to the clock, to this day it only has three faces no dial facing North as you will see from the photo. Three centuries ago the city fathers decided that the time should be hidden from the nearby Scots!





## GOD IN THE ARTS

*The Revd Michael Burgess has written a series on animals and birds as seen in art and scripture: in this edition he considers a 13th century painting by Gerald of Wales.*

### He gave us eyes to see them: St Kevin of Glendalough and the blackbird



When we look at the life of the 6th century Irish hermit saint, Kevin of Glendalough, we see someone who had that special relationship with the birds and animals. An otter, the wolf and a wild boar were his co-hermits. We are told that during Lent as he was kneeling in prayer in his cell, he held his arm out of the window. A blackbird mistook the arm for the branch of a tree and built its nest in the saint's hand. The saint waited until the eggs were laid and hatched and the fledglings had flown.

One of the earliest depictions of this story is a marginal drawing in *The History of Ireland* by Gerald of Wales in the early 13th century and now in the British Library. He visited Ireland several times and was entranced by the marvels he saw and the tales he heard.

To accompany the story of St Kevin, an unknown artist drew the saint sat in his cell, cradling the blackbird gently in his left hand. Seamus Heaney captured the story in a poem in which he wondered if the saint was self-forgetful in all those months or perhaps in agony. The poet praises St Kevin because he sought no reward, but offered time and patience to care for this sign of new life.

So much has happened to us during this year for good and ill, and we wonder what the new year will bring. Perhaps St Kevin can inspire us to journey with faith and hope, and to travel through the months ahead with a renewed concern for the created order around. The Gaelic name Kevin means loved. Like him, we pray that we will love and cherish this planet, and care for the wonder and beauty of birds like the blackbird and all the animals. Then we can rejoice with him in the wonder of Creation that displays the handiwork of God the Creator.



*I'm sorry Michael, even if you have changed your ringtone to 'Away in a Manger, it's still ALL mobiles OFF!*



*We don't sing carols no more ... you 'ave to listen to 'em on me phone.*

## EDITOR'S INTERVIEW

*Moji Aguda - a regular member of St Paul's congregation with a remarkable career story to tell.*

Moji was born in Hackney in 1967, a British citizen, her Mum, still alive aged 82, and her Dad, who passed away in 2021, were both from the Yoruba tribe in the Ekiti State of Nigeria. They had come together to London in 1965 to study respectively Accountancy and Business Administration. They were married in 1966 and stayed in the UK until 1972, returning to Nigeria when their studies had finished. They felt uncomfortable in England at this time aware of racial undertones, expressed particularly by what could be seen in the occasional landlady's window, 'no pets, no Irish and no Blacks'. Today, half a century on, Moji feels that the times are better now although returning to UK in 1991 made her homesick, longing for the affection of her parents.

Moji's early education from the age of 6 onwards was in Nigeria culminating in a BSc in Microbiology at Akura's Federal University of Technology in the State of Nigeria. Aged 24 she returned to London in 1991. It was an odd time for her. Although English is the main language in Nigeria, she met English in the different dialects of our people and had to sort her way through that for a number of years and as an adult to get used to what was a new country for her. It was a time of odd jobs, including being a tea lady at the Trocadero. It was also a time for more study, taking a course in business administration, which was to serve her in good stead. Married in 1992, she and her husband, who passed away in 2015 aged 52, had a son called Tobi in 1993.



Joining the Crown Prosecution Service in their City of London headquarters she worked there as an executive officer for 8 years. It was interesting work, helping to prepare criminal and traffic cases. The time came to think about a change of career and in 2001 she took a post graduate degree course in education at the University of Hertfordshire. Then from 2002 onwards in succession she had posts in Bushy Hall Academy, Queens School and finally in the Whitmore High School in Harrow where she has been for the last 22 years. At Whitmore she is Head of Year 12 (16/17 year-olds), her core subjects are Biology to A level, Chemistry and Physics to GCSE level, additionally last year she had to include Sociology, Health and Social Care in her teaching portfolio. Clearly this is very demanding, 21 class contact lessons weekly, the Year 12 administration and all the planning and marking. The school day involves leaving home at 6.45 am, arriving around 7.40 am and getting home around 6.30 pm! Time for a quick meal before getting down to some studying!

Whitmore is an interesting and very academic school, judged to be Outstanding by Ofsted and one of the top 60 state secondary schools in England. It has around 1800 students of which 420 are in the Sixth Form. It has a high ethnic mix, approximately 60% Asian, 20% white and 20% black and it is very well supported by the parents, many of them with an immigrant background who see education to be of critical importance. A mark of success is not only the exceptional exam results but the fact that 99% of children in the Fifth Forms move on into the Sixth. Moji enjoys her work but does look forward to one more change in her career path. It would be good to get away from the demands of incessant marking, preparation and planning. To this end she is studying on average 7 hours weekly through the Open University for a BA in Production Management.

She is now far too busy to read, which was her great hobby, but she does love to cook, her favourite being blends of English and Nigerian, lots of mixed herbs and garlic, a touch of curry powder, some meat and spinach, a typical meal being 'eforiro' which is a mouth-watering African stew made with English spinach and local condiments

Since returning to England in 1991 Moji has lived in Wembley and Sudbury before buying her Hemel Hempstead house in Highfield's Wharfedale.

Although separated from her Mum and elder brother who live in Nigeria and another brother who lives in the USA, family ties are close as three other siblings live in England and she has four nieces and nephews here. It is very special to get together at Christmas when 12 of the family meet around the table to celebrate together. Interestingly she is now looking after her Damola, who is studying BTech Sports at Whitmore. This reflects what has happened over the years with the other three variously living with her and travelling daily to study at Whitmore. This shows clearly how close and supportive the family are to each other.

Moji has been a regular attender at St Paul's for the last two years, usually joined by Damola. She found us after the pandemic, a handy and friendly church just down the road and we love to have her with us. It was great to see her mother and brother from Nigeria in the congregation on their recent visit to England and also occasionally to see Damola's mother, Foluke. Moji's Christian faith has deep roots, well-grounded through her very religious parents and a grandfather who was a lay preacher.

Here in England until the pandemic she went to London's Kingsway International Pentecostal Church where she became a deaconess.

She feels that faith in Nigeria and Nigerian Christians is very deep.

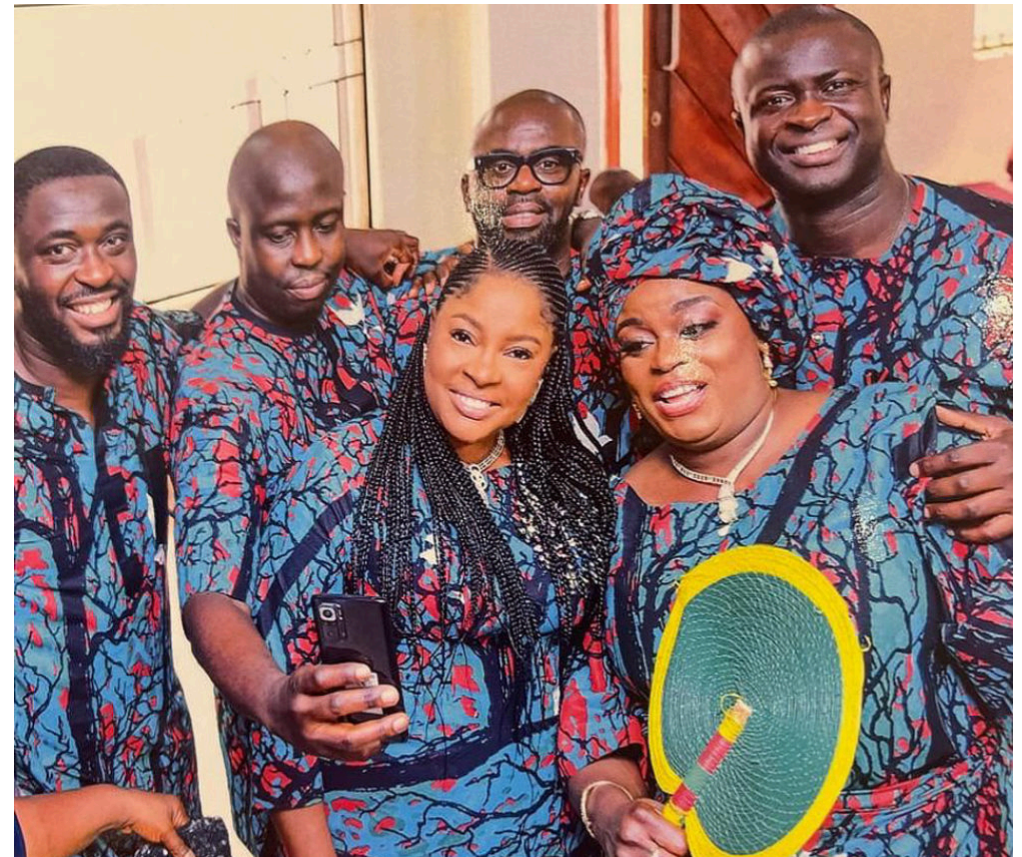


*Moji wither son, Tobi*

God is seen as healer and Saviour, 'we have no NHS, no good welfare system in place so we depend wholly on God'. Her belief has been sustained by personal experience, a sister in law with breast cancer being miraculously healed through prayers.

Moji is one of life's optimists and one of life's doers. She knows what she is doing and where she is going.

Another career beckons, as does another marriage, and maybe another final home.



Moji and her five siblings, gathered for their Dad's funeral

But where will that final home be? She has only been back to Nigeria three times since 1991, but might she return there for good one day? This is a tricky question for British girl born in Hackney who has spent nearly 40 years of her life here. Where really is her home? I warm to this dilemma, having lived locally, and being very happy here for forty years, but still when I go up to the Lake District and the Borders I feel that I'm coming home.

Moji, when asked if she might be interviewed for STOMP exclaimed, 'what me, I'm not interesting!'. I leave you the reader to reflect and conclude about this. I know my answer!

# GOD IN THE SCIENCES

*This series is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

## **Meditation on the Incarnation**

*After the bright beam of annunciation  
fused heaven with dark earth  
His searing sharply-focused light  
went out for a while  
eclipsed in amniotic gloom:  
His cool immensity of splendour  
His universal grace  
small-folded in a warm dim  
female space*

This extract from Luci Shaw's poem 'Made Flesh' captures something of the wonder of the moment when the second person of the Trinity became an embryo.

How does a single cell turn into an infant, and what does that process say about us – and God? These are the questions that Professor Jeff Hardin, a developmental biologist, asks himself. Having studied theology as well as science, he has a unique perspective on embryonic development.

A new-born baby is made of around five trillion cells. These cells come in hundreds of different types, each of which must be in the correct place for the child's body to function properly. Every new life is the result of intricate and highly ordered processes. Three things must happen as an embryo develops.

The first important process is for cells to take on their identity as types of muscle, bone, nerves, and so on. The second is when each cell learns which part of the body it belongs to. Third, those cells are moved around to form the different tissues and organs. These three are not discrete stages, but they all happen at around the same time, building up gradually like the different aspects of a picture coming into focus.

All three of these processes are driven forward by the movement of cells, the connections between them, and the signals they pass to each other.



Jeff studies a sort of cellular glue which is involved in joining cells together. Making and breaking these adhesions can affect how cells move and signal to each other, their identity in the body, how they are organised as groups, and ultimately their survival. This glue is found on the surface of cells throughout the animal kingdom, including the small worms Jeff's lab studies.

For Jeff, peering down a microscope at tiny worm embryos can be an act of worship. It is also an exercise in art appreciation, as he learns to appreciate the created order. Understanding the complexities of development, while also being aware that God knows that process intimately both as Creator and created, fills Jeff with a profound sense of awe, wonder and worship.

Does the minute scale of our early development, compared to the incomprehensibly vast and ancient universe, give us a sense of insignificance? Psalm 8 says, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?"

For Jeff and the Psalmist, such feelings can be a positive experience if they serve as a reminder to be humble in the face of a universe that is vastly complicated but also deeply meaningful, made by a God who loves each one of us.

# ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December

### Advent Sunday

9.30am Family Mass *St Mary's*  
Preparing for Christmas

11.15am Service for all the Family  
*St Paul's* – Preparing for  
Christmas

11am-3pm Old Town Market *St Mary's*

6.30pm 'Advent Reflections'  
Team Service *Grovehill*

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December

4.30pm Christingle Service in aid of the  
Children's Society *St Mary's*

## Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>

12-4pm Old Town Christmas Market  
*St Mary's*

\*6pm Service of 9 Lessons and Carols  
*St Paul's*

## Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

4pm Carols by Candlelight *St Mary's*

### CHRISTMAS EVE

4pm Crib Service, *St Mary's*  
*(children are encouraged to  
dress up as shepherds, sheep,  
wise people, Joseph, Mary etc)*

\*8pm 'Early bird' Midnight Mass,  
*St Paul's*

11.30pm Midnight Mass *St Mary's*

### CHRISTMAS DAY

\*9.30am Family Mass, *St Mary's*

\*Services usually available on YouTube



On 16th November 2024, St Paul's Church in Highfield successfully hosted a group of 43 members of the ZINAFE leadership and intercessors teams for a Day Retreat. We had members who travelled from different places such as Lincolnshire, Sheffield, Bristol, Bedfordshire, Luton, Portsmouth Brighton, London, Aylesbury, Northampton, Southend on Sea, Birmingham and Hertfordshire.

The day started with Holy Communion that was celebrated by Reverend Father John, between 10 -11am. After a short break, the day quickly, and fruitfully proceeded in sessions and finished at about 3.45pm.

On behalf of the whole Fellowship, we are very grateful for making us welcome and well looked after. Indeed we felt and witnessed the goodness of the Lord. Once again thank you.

*Sister Patricia HSM*



## ALL SOULS' AT ST PAUL'S

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*St Paul's altar on All Souls' service. (Note the new backcloth)*

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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Best wishes for a blessed and peaceful Christmas from Gordon and Jeff with thanks to those who have supported us this year by reading, commenting upon, agreeing to being interviewed for, and contributing to, SToMP's pages - not forgetting Norma and Sheila who carefully print and assemble each edition.

## The Parish of St Mary & St Paul

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### **The Clergy**

The Revd Canon John Williams Tel: 07522 504087:

vicar@stmaryandstpaul.org.uk

The Revd Dr. Luke Geoghegan

### **Parish Office**

Norma Howie Tel: 07901 359117

admin@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

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