

St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter December 2019 – February 2020



Wait for it...

The waiting is over. The Christmas trees are up. The John Lewis advert is out and the lights are just about to be switched on. If you haven't decided what you are eating for Christmas Day, where you are going to be staying and what you want Santa to bring you, then you should definitely start to panic. Because this year, other than the small distraction of an election, if we spend enough money and switch on enough sparkly lights then Christmas is going to be perfect! But...

None of that has anything to do with Christmas. Apart from the very first word in the title. Wait.

The Christian Festival of Christmas is not about consumption, or sparkly lights, although there is one of those in the story. It's not about resolving climate change by spending money as if there is no tomorrow, oh the irony. It's not about short lived political pledges, which may or may not change tomorrow. It's not about the rush by our own effort to make everything perfect, or just manage it well so we can cope with having the mother-in-law stay.

It is the fact that 2000 years ago in a forgotten part of the Roman Empire, in an out of the way village, God stepped into the world as a human being. His birth was celebrated by a few outcast Shepherds who would briefly come in from the cold. Their response was to worship this newborn King, not fill their trollies to overflowing from the local supermarket.

But there is also a bit that comes before the Christian Christmas. It is a time of preparation. Not getting ready for the relatives or thinking about what to eat for Christmas dinner. But waiting - the season of advent- where we wait again in anticipation for the arrival of the King of Kings. We prepare our hearts to worship, not at the altar of consumption, but in wonder that God has chosen to move into the creation he has made and make his dwelling among us.

So I invite you to pause, to wait, to prepare yourself for Christmas in the most important way. Be still, watch, pray, wait, for the King of King is coming and you will find him in a manger.

We would love to invite you to join us for our Christmas Services.

Mark Searle

Rector of All Saints Weston, Bath, with Langridge and North Stoke

FRIENDS OF LANGRIDGE

On 20th November many of us gathered in the Village Hall at Langridge for a Reception with wine and delicious food before our Autumn Lecture. The Friends had invited Stephen Bird, the Head of Heritage Services in Bath, to speak on **The People of Roman Bath.**

He gave a fascinating insight into the centuries when the Romans lived in Britain, but also provided an illuminating coverage of all the many other people who lived in or visited Bath - from different parts of Britain and abroad – and of all classes, of trades, professions and ranks. An experienced speaker, Stephen never fails to pull his audience in to share his knowledge and enthusiasm.

The Friends have always been valued at Langridge for their continued support. Recently they provided their refreshments following various services like Harvest and Remembrance which we really appreciate.

Our 2nd Saturdays continue to be well attended and again we are grateful to the enthusiastic volunteers who organise these.

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2nd Saturday relaxation

PAST SERVICES

Three lay readers from All Saints Weston have contributed to our recent services. In August, Tom Peryer introduced us to Café Church, with a sermon on fruitfulness, accompanied by baskets of fruit. Then in September Pippa Page took a Communion Service “by extension” – the wafers and wine having been blessed previously by Mark Searle. Sarah Couchman joined us in November to lead our Remembrance Service, preaching on “Binding up the broken-hearted”, which was very touching.

Our Harvest Festival this year took place at 4 pm on September 22nd led by Mark Searle. The church was decorated with beautiful flower arrangements and many varieties of harvest produce. These were auctioned afterwards by Harry Umpleby while we enjoyed wine and refreshments.

We were also very pleased to welcome our Archdeacon, the Venerable Dr Adrian Youings, who led our service and preach on 17th November.

Once again we are very grateful for our organists’ support. We have been lucky to listen to two new organists, Jules Addison and Daniel Cushing. Both young men are highly skilled, and a pleasure to listen to. Jules has agreed to give us a recital next year.

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REMEMBRANCE NOVEMBER 2019

PAST EVENTS

On 20th October, the **Mercy Ships charity**, which was much favoured by the late Peter Pelly, came give us a talk in place of the sermon. This gave a fascinating insight to the remarkable work which is carried in different parts of the world like off West Africa. Their ship, which is specifically designed within as a hospital with all the relevant equipment, amazingly remains moored for up to 10 months off the coast. The medical teams liaise with the local people and make visits to hospitals but also carry out free medical care including operations and clinics on the ship.

RIDE+STRIDE

As previously mentioned, this year's Ride+Stride day (14th September) was actually my 70th birthday. So I decided to try to get to 70 churches (or, strictly, current or former places of Christian worship) in and around Bath. With the support of my daughter and her husband, we did it! We started at 8:30 with All Saints Weston, and spent the morning cycling (with some pushing of the bike) around the suburbs of Bath. Lunch was at Emmanuel Church in Lower Weston, where we were greeted by a welcome party and a piano recital (including a rendition of 'Happy Birthday'). We then left the bikes in a friend's office car park near Green Park, and walked broadly clockwise around the city. Our final "church" was Bath Abbey at 4:15 pm, and thence to the ice cream shop nearby!

I'm very pleased to say that I was able to raise sponsorship of £540. Half of this sum will eventually come back to Langridge church, courtesy of the Somerset Churches Trust treasurer (me!).

Tony Davies

(Our Congratulations! *Editor*)

CHURCHYARD

Despite a very wet day a few energetic people kindly gathered on 26 October to help with the church cleaning and clearing outside for which we are really grateful.

We think that, with help from Marie at Court Farm, we are winning the battle against the ivy which has been covering much of the wall around the churchyard. In the process we revealed some bulges in the dry stone wall above Langridge Lane; these have now been professionally dealt with. A small slippage in the wall on the north side of the churchyard has also been repaired.

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FUTURE SERVICES

Christmas is almost upon us. We shall be decorating the church on 14th December at 10am and we would be delighted if anyone would like to join us.

This year our Christingle will be at 11am on 15th December, and the Christmas Carol Service will be at 3 pm on 22nd December, followed by mince pies and mulled wine, and led by Mark Searle, He will also be with us for our service of Holy Communion on Christmas Day. This will be at 9 am, to enable Mark to go on to All Saints Weston at 9am.

To accommodate the pressures on Mark's diary, in most future months the service pattern will now be (normally at 9:30 am):

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| First Sunday | BCP Morning Prayer |
| Second Sunday | CW Holy Communion with Mark Searle, or led "by extension" by one of the lay readers |
| Third Sunday | Family Service (CW Morning Prayer) |
| Fourth Sunday | BCP Holy Communion |

However, there will be variations from this pattern, for instance at festival times.

CAROL SINGING

The annual carol singing in the Valley will be held at Court Farm again this year by kind invitation of Marie. It will be on Tuesday, 17th December at 7pm with drink and nibbles before a start at 7.30pm.

FUTURE EVENTS

The **Beckford Singers**, a local group of mainly a cappella singers, will be giving us a choral concert on Saturday 14th December, at 7:30 pm.

Jules Addison, who we recently welcomed to play the organ at one of our Services, will be giving us a Recital in the Spring, which will also feature some soprano solos. It is scheduled for Saturday 21st March.

We are planning, in 2020, to repeat the **Lent Course and Three Churches Walk** that were so successful in 2019. The first Lent Course evening session is likely to be in the first week of March, and the walk in May; further details to follow.

**Letter from the Right Reverend Peter Hancock,
Bishop of Bath and Wells
For Parish Newsletters - December 2019**

So it has been decided. There is to be a General Election on 12 December and much has been made of the fact that this is the first December election since 1923. Things could be worse however, as the 1885 General Election took place over three weeks from 24 November to 18 December 1885. It was nonetheless an important milestone in social history, as it extended voting rights so that for the first time a majority of adult males could vote and most constituencies returned only a single member to Parliament. These were quite radical developments and at that election large numbers of men voted for the first time. It saw the Liberals, led by Gladstone win the most seats, but not an overall majority, with the Irish Nationalists holding the balance of power and the Unionist MPs having a significant voice. The 1885 election also saw the first socialist party, the Social Democratic Freedom participate.

So significant was this election that my predecessor, Bishop Arthur Hervey, wrote an open letter on 2 October 1885 suggesting that 'all Christian subjects of the Queen had a duty of special prayer to Almighty God that He will be pleased to guide the minds of the Electors to make such a choice of representatives as shall tend most to the glory of God, the honour and welfare of our Sovereign, and the happiness of the people.' In His view Parliament was responsible for establishing 'peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety' and the 'welfare of all people.' In asking people to pray, as well as to vote, he made it clear that whilst people would have different 'political leanings' that they needed to come together to pray for the 'peace and happiness of the nation at large'.

I think we all know that this General Election before us now will similarly be critical in helping to determine the future of the United Kingdom – at least for the immediate future. In writing this article I am therefore seeking to follow Bishop Arthur Hervey by reminding us all of the responsibility we have to pray for our country and to work with all people for the welfare and the well-being of everyone.

With my prayers and very best wishes,

The Right Revd Peter Hancock
Bishop of Bath and Wells

MEMORY CORNER

We always have such pleasure seeing the magnificent shire horses in the fields north of Langridge churchyard – this is their story.

Shire Beau rewarded for double incredible lifesaving act

A horse from Langridge near Bath has been recognised for its lifesaving actions.

Beau the shire was a runner-up in the Amplifon Awards for remarkable people and pets, in the Brave Britons 2019 Hero Pet category.

Beau saved a life of ‘wife’ Beatrice after their owners and a team of farm hands had given up hope.

Beatrice, a 17 year old mare, was found collapsed in her stable, suffering from severe equine colic. Due to her weight and size, the longer she remained ion the ground, the more at risk she was of succumbing to fatal organ failure.

Owners Donald Macintyre and his wife Jane Lipington, who have 23 rare bred horses at their farm in Langridge, feared the worst and together with four farm hands, spent six hours trying in vain to lift Beatrice using a tractor and straps.

The rescue team had exhausted all options and Beatrice’s temperature rose to dangerous levels and her heart rate dropped. Donald and Jane agreed for her to be put down.

Watching quietly from the next stall all day throughout the rescue mission was Beatrice’s ‘husband’ Beau, who was eventually allowed to say his goodbyes.

Donald said: “It was only 20 minutes before we were about to put her down and Beau leaned over the stable door and started nipping at Beatrice, getting hold of her halter with his teeth and shaking it.”

Remarkably, he then lifted her head up and helped shaky Beatrice into an upright position, assisted by rescuers and ultimately saved her life. He achieved what six hours of human assistance with machinery and straps had failed to do.

Jane said: “We began to realise something a bit special was happening. The vet could not believe it – she really didn’t think Beatrice was going to survive. Everything was closing down.

We couldn’t have got her out alive without Beau and, for whatever reason, he knew that she had to get off the floor.

Donald said: “Beau deserves to be recognised. It was incredible. I’ve never seen anything like it before.

This article appeared in the Bath Evening Chronicle.

At the Award Ceremony Laurie MacIntyre received the Beau’s Award from the Duke of Kent.



Beau



Beatrice and their foal

You will have seen the photograph on our first page showing one of our beautiful handmade hassocks. We feel very fortunate to have these in our church, some having been dedicated to individuals. They have been inspirationally designed and worked by Ruth Corbett who has worshipped here and loved this church for very many years. She has been ably assisted by Margaret Allen, who was Treasurer of the Friends for over forty years, and has recently completed the final pair. They will be valued for many years.

LANGRIDGE SERVICES December 2019 to February 2020

Please note the service schedule has altered

Date	Time	Type of Service	Preacher
1 Dec 2019	9.30	MP BCP Advent	Revd J Crowe
8 Dec	9.30	HC CW	Revd Mark Searle
15 Dec	11.00	Christingle	Mrs S Couchman/Mr R Lewis
22 Dec	3pm	Carol Service	Revd Mark Searle
25 Dec	9am	HC CW Christmas Day	Revd Mark Searle
29 Dec	9.30	HC BCP	Revd R Webb
5 Jan 2020	9.30	MP BCP	Revd A Claridge
12 Jan	9.30	HC CW	Revd Mark Searle
19 Jan	9.30	Family Service	Reflective Service
26 Jan	9.30	HC BCP	Revd J Crowe
2 Feb	9.30	MP BCP	Revd R Clifton
9 Feb	9.30	HC CW	ASW Readers
16 Feb	9.30	Family Service	Revd A Claridge
23 Feb	9.30	HC BCP	Revd R Webb

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter (March - May 2020) please contact Liz White regarding Church matters, and Friends' news. We would like to hear about all items of interest – comments, events or special occasions by 15th February 2020.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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You can follow current news over the next three months on our website:

www.stmarymagdalenelangridge.com or let us have your email address if you would like to receive the e-newsletter. Contact: angelaumpleby@sky.com