

# St Mary Magdalene Langridge

**Langridge Parish Newsletter June to August 2019**

**Letter from Revd Mark Searle  
Rector of All Saints, Weston**

**June 2019**



Have you had the experience of becoming interested in a particular thing. Maybe it's getting towards summer and you need some new flip flops, or you wonder if you should investigate electric cars, or even just notice a gloriously coloured purple flower in your garden. For the rest of the day all you can see are flip flops, electric cars or purple flowers. These things were there before but now they are highlighted in our vision. Our brains are extraordinary like that. Even now, if I say where are the red things – I will unconsciously focus on all those things – you are unable to stop yourself.

The Christian faith doesn't get many positive headlines these days. We find ourselves in an increasingly difficult environment. This is especially true if you actually believe that Jesus is God and wants to partner with you in transforming the world. The story, that some parts of our culture would like us to believe, is that it is only ok to be a Christian if it has no effect on what you do. Therefore it is increasingly unpopular.

While it is true that the Christian faith is currently in decline in the UK, that is not the case around the world. Many churches are growing in the UK - they are the ones that believe that Jesus is God and take his great co-mission seriously. Worldwide there are 2.18 billion of us (2010 figures) and the average age of a Christian around the world is 28. The projected number of Christians by 2050 is expected to be over 3 billion. But like the purple flowers, or the flip flops, how do you spot them?

Being a Christian is not about attending a building. It is about being part of a community who gather in the name of Jesus and live to make a difference in the world. Jesus calls these people disciples. They don't just have classroom knowledge but are choosing to be apprenticed to Jesus - working out together how to live for him in the world. Jesus says there are two key ways to spot his followers. First by how they love each other and second by their fruit. We are supposed to make a difference to the world around us.

J. John tells the story (see below) of how he describes his work as a pastor to people he meets for the first time. In response to the question, "What do you do?" He replies:

“I work for a global enterprise, we have outlets in nearly every country of the world. We have hospitals and hospices and homeless shelters, we do marriage work, we have orphanages, feeding programmes, educational programs. We do justice and reconciliation. Basically we look after people from birth to death and we deal in the area of behavioural alteration... it’s called the church... have you heard of it?”

( Watch: J. John tell the story below: <https://youtu.be/L6TGxKvSqH8> )

Recently, at All Saints we gathered together to say farewell to Rob Stone whose life was cut short. His wife Rachael had come to faith over thirty years ago, but for Rob he had never been able to take that step. He was funny, faithful, loving and stood by Rachael with great integrity. At the end of 2018 he joined the Alpha Course and in his own words, “was the only person who failed Alpha”. In 2019 he did Alpha again, this time it was different. He had a moment, when even with the many questions, he decided to follow Jesus. But the key moment had taken place before that. Towards the end of the course I asked Rob what he was going to do differently as a result of Alpha. He replied, “I am going to come to church with Rachael and we are going to start a Homegroup”. You see, Rob had already started to follow Jesus, he had more than a moment. He was taking the first steps of a life time.

Jesus has his followers everywhere. I hope you start to see them everywhere. Whether you are following him or not, why not take a moment now to pray. It could change your life and help transform the world.

*Mark Searle*

## **FRIENDS OF LANGRIDGE**

There have been a few changes to the Friends committee of late. At our AGM in April Victoria Humphries officially stepped down as chairperson and Margaret Allen stepped down as treasurer. Victoria has been a committed and incredibly organised chairperson, giving so much time, energy and enthusiasm ensuring all our meetings and events run smoothly. Margaret has been treasurer from the very beginning which we believe totals an incredible 41 years! She has tirelessly kept track of the accounts to the penny and been involved in organising so many, many events over the years. Margaret would often amuse us all at our meetings with tales of Friends events from the past. Both will be greatly missed and the Friends would like to sincerely thank them for all they have contributed over the years. Tony Davies has now taken over from Margaret as treasurer.

The Friends have continued to provide refreshments on various occasions. On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March, the Friends served ‘Coffee and Croissants’ after the 9.30am church service. This event was designed to replace ‘Soup on Sunday’ as now all services will again be held at 9.30. The refreshments were enjoyed by all on a gloriously sunny morning and gave everyone time to chat and catch up after the service. Please do look out for forthcoming ‘Coffee and Croissants’ following services.

*Kate Bravin*

## PAST SERVICES

Over Easter we once again welcomed a marvellous range of visiting clergy to lead us. Roger Clifton led our Palm Sunday service, Robert Webb took a Maundy Thursday Communion, and Antony Claridge led on Easter Sunday. This spring we have also welcomed John Crowe, Sarah Couchman, Judith Harries, Richard Hunt and Tom Peryer, and of course Mark Searle.

On Mothering Sunday we had a delightful Service with Sarah Couchman and the flower posies were distributed to everyone by Ann Flewitt's granddaughters.

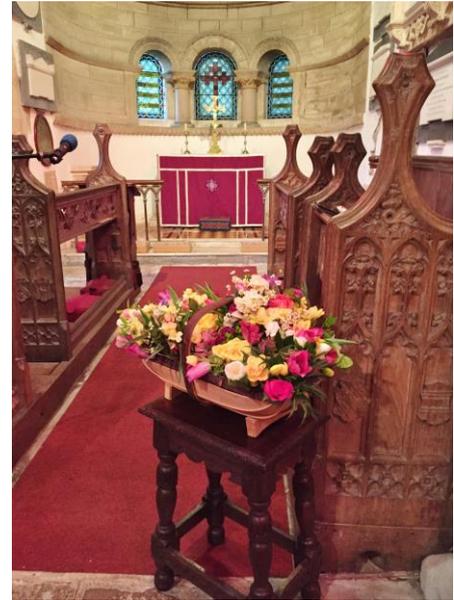
Ann's ashes were interred at Langridge on 6<sup>th</sup> April with a moving ceremony led by Revd Robert Webb with her family.

There was a memorable thanksgiving service for Victoria Stiff on 30<sup>th</sup> April. The coffin arrived on a horse-drawn dray, and the burial was followed by harp music in the churchyard.

On 19<sup>th</sup> May we broke with recent tradition by having our Family Service at 11 am and taken by Tom Peryer, following which we adjourned to the Hare & Hounds for what has now become an annual lunch. A good time was had by all.

We collaborated with St Martin's North Stoke and ASW to put on a Lent course, with four evening sessions on "Living fruitfully" – reflecting the Bishops' Lenten message about conservation.

Bath Spa Ladies Choir, students of music from the University, came to give an excellent choral recital in the church on the evening of Saturday 25 May, and we all enjoyed meeting them with refreshments together afterwards.



Mothering Sunday flower posies



Enjoying a delicious lunch



## PAST EVENTS

Claire Jones masterminded reconstruction of the Electoral Roll, prior to our Annual Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April in the Village Hall. Tony Davies remains as Churchwarden (with a vacancy for a second warden!) and Jeremy Humphries joined the PCC.

Liz Bavin and Claire Jones ran a very special **Quiet Day** at Court Farm on 4<sup>th</sup> May. With the theme of God's creation we were encouraged to begin the day by taking time to reflect on the sights, smells and sounds in the peace and beauty outside the church. We don't stop and appreciate these simple wonders often enough in our busy lives. At the end of the morning of prayer, guidance, music and quiet we met together in Court Barn for lunch and discussions. There may be another Day arranged in the autumn – details will be on our website.

**2nd Saturdays** in the Village Hall continue to be well attended and we thank all those who help arrange them.

On 27<sup>th</sup> May we repeated last year's **Three Churches Walk**, walking from ASW up to Langridge Village Hall and back, and singing a hymn at Prospect Stile.

The **2019 Ride and Stride** will be taking place on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September** and details will be on our website.



At Prospect Stile

## FUTURE SERVICES

Sarah Couchman will take our Morning Prayer service on Whitsunday (9<sup>th</sup> June).

At the Morning Service on 16<sup>th</sup> June (Trinity Sunday) at 9:30, we will have a talk from the "Bath Welcomes Refugees" group in place of a sermon. A similar occasion featuring "Mercy Ships" is planned for the autumn.

Our Patronal Festival Service this year is on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

Mark Searle will bless the Lammas Loaf at our service on 28<sup>th</sup> July.

After the success of our outdoor service following the Flower Festival last summer and led by Rev. Mark Searle, we are hoping to organise another outdoor service later this year. The Friends are planning to provide refreshments, perhaps in the form of Pimms! Please do look out for details.

## MEMORY CORNER

**With Caroline Davey's memories we are privileged to be hearing from someone whose family links have been local for a very long time.**

I think that I am very fortunate to have lived for the whole of my life within five miles of where both sets of my grandparents lived, and where all four sets of my great-grandparents lived.

My paternal grandfather was born at the Batch in Swainswick and lived for all his life in Swainswick, apart from two brief spells as a child when he lived at Langridge at The Grove, and also in the house where I now live. He went to Swainswick School and was followed there in due course by my father, myself and then my two sons. Hopefully, in 2021 one of my grand-daughters will become the fifth generation to there.

My paternal grandmother was born at Whitcombe Farm in Fairfield Park. Her family farmed briefly at Upper Farm in Langridge. A few years later in 1900, they moved to farm at Court Farm, Langridge where they remained until the farm was sold to the Bowyers in 1951, when my two great uncles retired.

Court Farm was rented from the Blathwayt Estate until some of the Estate was sold in the 1920's and, as sitting tenants, they were able to buy the farm. When I was a child there were fifteen farmers in the valley producing milk. Now there are only two. In those days the milk was collected every day in churns. Now it is collected on alternate days by a bulk tanker.

How times have changed!

*Caroline Davey*

### FUTURE EVENTS

Once again we are very pleased that Richard Fenwick, the now retired Bishop of St Helena, has agreed to put on another **Organ Recital on Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup>**. It is at 6:30 pm, to be followed by refreshments served by the Friends. This is always a very special and enjoyable event so please do join us.

The Friends are also currently planning their **annual Harvest event**, which will again most likely take the form of a talk at the Village Hall. We have welcomed some super speakers over the last few years, often talking about local history.

This event is always popular so again please do look out for further details.

### **We all have something to offer**

There is a story told about Sir Michael Costa who was an Italian-born conductor and composer who became well known and popular in England during the nineteenth century. It is said that one day he was conducting a rehearsal in which the orchestra was joined by a great chorus. About halfway through the rehearsal, with trumpets blaring, drums rolling, and violins singing, the piccolo player muttered to himself, "What good am I doing? I might just as well not be playing. Nobody can hear me anyway." So he kept the instrument to his mouth, but he made no sound. Within moments, the conductor cried, "Stop! Stop! Where's the piccolo?" Michael Costa could tell that the piccolo was not playing. Something was missing and because of that the performance was incomplete.

I am sure there are times when we can all identify with that piccolo player. There are times when we may feel insignificant and useless. Whatever age we are there is the temptation to look at other people who seem to have more talent than we have, who are better at things than we are, who are more confident or skilled than we are - and to think we don't matter or that our contribution doesn't count. Perhaps we are tempted sometimes just to settle back and let somebody else do the work. We reason that what we have to offer won't make much difference anyway, or that because other people can do it much better than we can, that there is no point in us joining in.

I take heart from the story of the feeding of the five thousand. In the middle of that story we read of Andrew, Peter's brother saying: 'There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?' (John 6:9). This is a story of someone giving what he has to the Lord and about Jesus then using what is offered to feed a multitude of hungry people (John 6:1-14).

What do we learn from that? Surely one thing we learn is that each of us has something important to offer which God can take and bless and use. Whether our talent is great or small, the performance isn't complete until we do our best with what we have and until we offer our lives and our gifts to God and ask him to use us for his glory and to serve others.

With warm greetings,

The Right Revd Peter Hancock  
Bishop of Bath and Wells

## THE LANE

As the lane descends into the Valley, the cow parsley grows more densely,  
and seems to envelop you.

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The lane is a narrow turning  
Off the busy road at the top of the hill.  
High, flat land, stonewalled,  
Beech groves shaped by the wind,  
Cattle graze in buttercup fields.  
And larks fly high on a rising song.

You walk down the lane between the walls;  
Red poppies are lights in the glimmering grass.  
Farms, cottages are poised at the edge  
Of the lovely green valley beneath your feet.  
And wispy clouds are high above  
As you turn your back on the busy road.

You lose yourself as you walk on down.  
And down and down the drowsy lane  
Drowning in white whispering foam  
Caressing you from either side.  
You float and swim, and smile and sing  
Far away from the busy road.

*Joanna Pelly*

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After over 30 years at All Saints **Nigel and Pat Rawlinson** have decided that it is time to move on. Nigel has been employed as the Chaplain at the University of Bath since September 2016. This work involves visiting many other churches across the city and living on the university campus. So Pat and Nigel need to find a place where they can worship together that is closer to home. Having been linked with All Saints for over 30 years (36 for Pat), they are now joining the Bath Abbey community. We have always had such pleasure welcoming them to Langridge and our good wishes are with them.

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## PRAYER REQUESTS

Just inside the church we have a little book, in which visitors to the church write (usually anonymously) their prayer requests, which we then share with our congregations. Here is a recent request:

“Please pray for people to be kind, loving and caring for each other. Love is a superpower which cures illness, which is stronger than hate. Beauty of pure heart will save the world. Peace in our hearts will protect us from sadness, feeling on no sense, from anger. Life is beautiful when you appreciate every single ray of light and smile”.

<b>LANGRIDGE SERVICES</b>			
<b>June to August 2019</b>			
<b>Please note that the service on June 2 is at 6 pm and that on August 18 is at 4 pm</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Preacher</b>
June 2	6 pm	HC BCP	Revd R Webb
June 9	9.30	MP BCP <b>Whit Sunday</b>	Mrs S Couchman
June 16	9.30	Family Service <b>Trinity Sunday</b>	Bath Welcomes Refugees
June 23	9.30	HC CW	Revd M Searle
June 30	9.30	Reflective	N/A
July 7	9.30	HC BCP	Revd R Salisbury
July 14	9.30	HC BCP	Revd Canon J Crowe
July 21	9.30	Family Service <b>Patronal Festival</b>	Tbc
July 28	9.30	HC CW <b>Lammas</b>	Revd M Searle
August 4	9.30	HC BCP	Revd A Claridge
August 11	9.30	MP BCP	Revd J Harries
August 18	4pm	Café Church	Mr T Peryer
August 25	9.30	HC CW	Revd R Hunt

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter ( September to November ) please contact Liz White regarding Church matters, and Judy Rippin for the Friends’ news. We would like to hear about all items of interest – comments, events or special occasions by 16<sup>th</sup> August.

#### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Rector	Revd Mark Searle	01225 421159
Church Warden	Tony Davies	01225 336124
Treasurer	Laura Somodi	07816 961951
Langridge Friends	Judy Rippin	01225 858118
Newsletter editor	Liz White	01225 744852

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

**[www.stmarymagdalenelangridge.com](http://www.stmarymagdalenelangridge.com)** or let us have your email address if you would like to receive the e-newsletter. Contact: [angelaumpleby@sky.com](mailto:angelaumpleby@sky.com)