

St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter June - August 2020

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

June 2020



Easter Lilies in the church porch

We live in unprecedented times. The experience for all of us over the last two months has been extraordinary. We find ourselves in the middle of a storm that we can't see. It's difficult to identify and can leave us feeling fearful. We're all in the same storm but we're not all in the same boat.

Over these last two months, we've had to find new ways of connecting. Some of us will have learned how to use Zoom and WhatsApp to connect with family and friends. Others have found ways of connecting via dial-in phone services for the church.

One of the realities of this time is the realisation that the church is not a building. But the church is people. The people of God, who gather around Jesus as the head, this is the church.

It could be a long time before life gets back to normal. If we ever wanted to get back to normal. I wonder what during this time, you've been learning. And what you want to take into whatever the future holds. I encourage you to take time to reflect on what you've learnt to reflect on what you're grieving for. To reflect on where is God in it all.

In Psalm 46 God is described as being in the midst of the storm. Psalm 46 ends with this wonderful phrase, **be still and know that I am God**. I encourage you to take time to be still and know that he is God. Even amid the storm.

Mark Searle

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

https://www.allsaintsweston.org.uk/Groups/304706/Sundays_Church_Live.aspx

SERVICES: LANGRIDGE IN LOCKDOWN

In March (how long ago that seems!) we enjoyed services led by Rev Roger Clifton, Rev Antony Claridge and our Rector.

Then lockdown struck. At very short notice, churches were told that we would not be allowed to hold services (nor indeed to permit private prayer). This prohibition remains in place, although some relaxation may occur in June or July.

Fortunately, Victoria Humphries knew of a low-cost teleconferencing facility named WhyPay?. It is simple to use, and does not exclude those who do not have computers, or do not want to use video conferencing on their computers. Since 22nd March we have held nine (at the time of writing) telephone services. Seven members of our clergy/lay reader team have successfully led services for us, and it has been a real treat to see how easily each of them has tackled the novel technology.

The technology has its limitations. It is hard for participants to synchronise, so collective speech (for instance when we all say together the Creed or the Lord's Prayer) becomes a little ragged. And synchronised collective singing is impossible! At present we have settled for just one, preferably short, hymn at the very end of the service. By the end of the hymn, singing is replaced by giggling. How joyful it is to end in such a convivial way.

The Lord moves in a mysterious way. In recent years the attendance at our 'live' services would normally be about 10 or 11. But on average, 16 or 17 people are taking part in our telephone services. Sometimes we are joined by folk from other churches, who know the service leader – one Sunday, Rev John Crowe's friends and relatives swelled our 'congregation' to 23.

Any reader of the Newsletter would be welcome to join our telephone services: please contact Tony Davies on 01225-336124 for details on how to join. *Tony Davies*

EVENTS

Sadly, we had to postpone "Songs and Music for Springtime" featuring Jules Addison playing our organ, and Luana Godwin (soprano). Watch this space for a rearranged date.

We also had to abandon the Three Churches Walk planned for late May, and only one of the four planned Lent Course evenings in March/April was possible. Two planned interments of ashes have been postponed.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting has been postponed until, probably, September. PCC and Standing Committee meetings are, however, taking place as scheduled but remotely.

At the time of writing, we are unable to schedule any future events. We will not be able to host Richard Fenwick's organ recital on 13th June, but Richard has kindly offered to put on a recital in the Autumn. We will update you through the website, by e-mail, by phone, or otherwise about this and anything else that is arranged. *Tony*

Davies

REMINDER OF PAST EVENTS



Bishop Richard Fenwick



Wildflower Walk Manor Farm

Our Memory this time is from Marion Brunt whose links go back a long way in Langridge. Her Mother grew up at Manor Farm and when married moved to Tadwick Farm. Marion's daughter Mandy has written this evocative poem.

A CHILDHOOD IN TADWICK

A childhood in Tadwick – in times long past,
We had a good one – we had a blast!
We didn't know of world affairs,
They were discussed when we were upstairs.
Of the struggles and troubles we weren't told,
Time enough for that when we grew old.

It wasn't all easy, I must confess,
Getting to school was tough, as you can guess.
Walking miles to catch the school bus,
But we did all that without too much fuss.
And in the winter wearing thick woolly tights,
Then home again – oh those dark, cold nights!

But a happy childhood was ours to enjoy,
Although we didn't realise the value and joy.
Once our daily chores were done,
Then we were off to have some fun!
No gadgets, no phones or television,
Inventing pastimes and games was our sole mission!

With a collection of the largest stones,
Then shouts of "look out, here it comes!"
This was to be our game of dare,
When you had to leave your hands right there.
The stone would roll with laughs and whoops,
Of course, I got it wrong – oh, ouch and oops!

Then off tobogganing in the snow,
Down the hills yelling "here we go!"
Forgetting the fence across our route,
Then praying that under it we would shoot!
No health and safety in those days,
Just a time that now would amaze!

A childhood in Tadwick – in times long past,
We had a good one – we had a blast!

VOICES FROM THE VALLEY

In this very unusual time it has been difficult to make so many adjustments, but the continuity of our church life at Langridge has been achieved through our weekly services, efficiently arranged by Tony by phone. Despite being remote, each one has been special with individual clergy and has provided a truly comforting spiritual involvement. We are so grateful as well to Tony for his commitment to all his responsibilities.

We can only in our minds take ourselves to the beautiful historic church of St Mary Magdalene where, for so many previous generations experiencing dire times – maybe the mediaeval plagues, local battles like Lansdown and the C20th wars, it will have provided continuity. The peace which pervades this ancient place still provides solace and inspiration for so many. Mavis Read, who worshipped here for very many years with her husband Edwin, would say ‘these walls speak to me as I enter’. We shall soon return ourselves.

Without our usual activities to bring us together I have invited some of those who live in the wonderful Langridge Valley to tell us how these weeks have been for them. *LW*

VALLEY VIEWS

from Marie Price

In these strange times the valley is full of new life, new grass, lambs, calves, and visitors. The swallows are back and the lanes are busier than the city centre, with ramblers, runners, riders, cyclists, with time to appreciate the wild beauty of the verges and hedgerows - best at this time of year - teeming with a profusion of wildflowers and rich with the smell of wild garlic toasting in the sun. Life under lockdown has its compensations...

MEMORY BY THE LAM BROOK

from Carol Ewing

The Lam Brook originates from the many springs that arise around the southern slopes of Freezing Hill and the Hamlet of Hamswell. The Brook flows over eight kilometers south east through Tadwick and Swainswick, finally joining the Avon at Lambridge. It meanders through farmland yet is fortunate in retaining a narrow ribbon of ancient woodland along most of its length.

Undisturbed through the millennia this woodland is ideal habitat for wildlife and many varieties of wild flowers. Early heralds of Spring are the Celandine and native Wood Anemone followed by wild Garlic, Cow Parsley, Toothwort, Yellow



Archangel, Red Campion, Flag Iris and many more. Wild Garlic (Ramsons) are useful in the kitchen as young leaves and flowers are used to flavour dishes, sauces and soups.

OUR VISIT TO TADWICK BARN

from Sue and David Selway

Our usual home is on an Island Gypsy boat which is currently in Brest in Brittany. We were due to return to her at the beginning of April but coronavirus took over and we have been locked down, staying at Tadwick Barn for the last couple of months. What a beautiful spot to live in!

We have really appreciated the kindness of Irene and Tony who own the Barn and have looked after us really well while we have been here, keeping us regularly supplied with eggs and milk. We have also really enjoyed meeting several people who live in the valley. They have been really friendly and we often stop and chat, keeping social distance of course. We have taken our daily exercise by walking down the road to the stream when we are feeling energetic and stopping at various distances when feeling less so.

We have loved watching spring arrive here and enjoyed watching the lambs and then the calves arrive in the fields. The progression of plants has been amazing- from primroses, white violets and daffodils to honesty, foxgloves and poppies now.

The Bull at Hinton has been a fantastic resource for us and we have taken to ordering weekly food boxes which we pick up from the pub. We have found that as well as fruit and veg and meat they have always been able to sell us the other items we have run short of.

We have engaged with the clap for carers on Thursday and enjoyed hearing other people and rattling pans down the valley. We have also painted a rainbow and put it in our window and lit a candle in the window for the nurses.

So, a big thank you to everyone in the valley who have made our unexpected stay here so much better, given that we could not get home.

LOCKDOWN

from Irene and Tony Godwin

“Stay at home” we were told. To stay at home in Tadwick in the Spring sounds like a gift. Whoopee! But it has been agonising, day by day, hearing the statistics of the virus deaths from all over the world. Therefore it has never seemed to be a holiday.

So what we have done is tackle the many unfinished jobs facing us indoors and outside. We hope we have improved our bit of this beauty spot of a valley.

We have known that, should we need help in an emergency, we have neighbours whom we could call on and who would, if needed, would call on us.

Our children have been very supportive but we have all missed being all together- especially for Tony’s birthday tea!

We feel privileged to be here, in Tadwick, in our home of 36 years, and have sympathy for those who struggle in restricted environments. The Thursday Clap for the NHS has lifted our spirits week by week. And our ducks have given us more eggs than we can eat!

Best wishes to you all. Stay safe and well.

We (my wife Judy and I) are very lucky in that my son (+ a little help from me), have built a new house (Annexe) in the wood beside the stream, and across the lane from our original cottage. The steps there had become too numerous for Judy's arthritis. Living on the ground floor we can look up through the wood to the waterfall, across our patio table where I put crushed peanuts out for smaller birds.

Our bird count includes :-

Blue Tits, a pair of which are nesting in a bird box immediately outside the french windows; Great tits which must be nesting in the hedge along the lane; Chaffinches, Robin(s) who like to chase other birds away, Dippers who are nesting in the stream bank. Kingfisher, Magpies, Crows, Wood Pigeons, Wrens. Mallards - drakes being a real danger to the duck as they all try to mate with her. I understand they now have a brood of ducklings but have not seen them as yet, I only hope the heron does not kill and eat the ducklings as it did last year. It also takes the trout in the brook which I feed.

2 Cock Pheasants - one we call "Fatty" for obvious reasons and the other called "Scruffy" as his white neck feathers are bedraggled as if he had been fighting. Scruffy is very tame and comes running for his peanuts if I call but Fatty only walks (perhaps in pheasant world he is too obese to run). Goldfinch, Tree Creepers, Blackbird and Sparrow or Dunnock.

In the Animal World we see :-

Roe Deer - last year there was a doe with 2 yearlings, one a buck and one a doe.

Unfortunately the buck was killed toward the top of the wood, it was a beautiful six point animal. This year there is a doe with two young, both bucks who all seem healthy.

Muntjac (deer) who look a somewhat like little pigs - they have been feeding on the garlic which grows profusely in our wood. Squirrels - I know they are not popular but they are fascinating (especially for Judy). They have an obvious structure - they will tolerate others until the food (peanuts) are getting low when the senior squirrels chase off and try and bite the juniors who are also feeding. I am trying (largely unsuccessfully) to train the squirrels not to get on the table where there are the crushed nuts. One or two mice which I have not been able to identify as they move so fast - Fieldmice perhaps. White Clawed Crayfish in the brook which I regularly feed - luckily the American Signal Crayfish have not yet reached this us although they are in the mouth of the brook, but I believe are hindered by the fall at Lower Swainswick.

Insects we see are too numerous to categorize. We do however see sedges of various types, Turkey browns and of course the Mayflies which are just beginning (early May). There will also be Cockchafer ("Maybugs") in a week or two. Bumble bees are here too.

We have installed a bench in our wood - it is a cool place in which to sit and watch the wildlife when the bench and chairs get too hot on the patio. Judy is much more social than I and we speak from the patio to anyone passing in the lane,

She sometimes sits on a chair by our parking area so as to engage any passers by in conversation - the isolating restrictions hit her particularly hard whereas I can usually find something to occupy me.

In view of the restrictions we have closed off our wood as we find that people otherwise allow their dogs to run off a lead in the wood and dogs can carry the virus and generally come up to you to be patted - thus giving a trail for the virus to follow. We also found one biker swimming in the waterfall pool!

LOCKDOWN AT MANOR FARM, LANGRIDGE – from Jane Lipington

Most mornings, when I wake at Manor Farm, it is quiet, it is peaceful and then, as after a bereavement, the thought & the accompanying feelings of loss & anxiety arise as I remember that the world is in the grip of a pandemic, the biggest crisis most of us have experienced during our lifetimes. On the farm, cocooned in this beautiful & protective part of the British Isles we are lucky enough to be able to carry on life much as usual.

With good weather & few distractions off the farm we are up to date with field work & so have been able to dedicate energy to projects on the farm. I have focused on the vegetable/fruit garden and Donald on photographing flowers for the planned upgrade of our website. If ever one needs a reaffirmation of the intricate beauty of the natural world a look at some of the images Donald has caught with his macro lens is a confirmation of the often surprising and stunningly beautiful detail that we miss with the naked eye.

On Lockdown we decided to avoid the shops as we are both on the vulnerable side of the age/health scale. Food procurement has been a little challenging & quite time consuming. Our immediate neighbours gathered together to order food deliveries from local shops to top up the fruit and vegetables harvested from our gardens. I have gradually dug up more and more lawn as I ran out of growing space (although the vegetable garden is still not quite as large as it was in Vera's heyday). It has been difficult to get seed so with the gardening folk of St Catherine we have a seed and plant swop arrangement which has worked very well. My garden looks better than it ever has (I even wondered whether we should have an online village produce show as a charity fund raiser?) although last night's frost has left potatoes and early beans blackened.

Looking out from the farm, the A46 has been silent apart from goods vehicles trundling heavily up & down & the skies have been so quiet so that a plane passing overhead is now an event. The air has gradually become cleaner & clearer. In the new quiet around Langridge bird activity has become more noticeable, territorial squabbling between crows, magpies & buzzards, and the calls & singing of nesting birds have filled the silenced sound waves. The lanes, the bridle paths and the footpaths have become quite crowded with walkers, with cyclists, with picnickers exploring and falling in love with this precious part of Somerset. This part of the lockdown I love.

I don't want to get back in a car, I prefer this slower pace of life dictated by bike or pedestrian travel. I love the cleaner air, the feeling that the natural world can breathe again. I feel hopeful that we may be able to grasp this moment of realisation that humans are part of all natural systems not above or in control of them & so we can, in a united way, make moves to heal this wounded planet earth.

Letter from the Right Reverend Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton

Recognise the one who stands beside you

‘Stay alert’ is the message as we ‘ease out of lockdown’. We know that for some there is little ease as we begin to re-engage with a world that is still fearful of Covid-19 and uncertain about its future. The requirement to ‘stay alert’ is to encourage us to watch out for signs of the virus and protect ourselves and others as necessary.

We’ve just celebrated Pentecost, often recognised as the birthday of the Church. Jesus’ message to his followers as he left them to return to his Father was that they were to ‘stay alert’, not to guard against something fearful to come but rather to be watchful for the Spirit that would free them from fear. It didn’t mean that there weren’t still physical dangers to face but rather that their spiritual lives should grow in boldness.

We have seen much courage exhibited throughout this crisis to date. Key workers who have continued to serve us day by day even whilst most of us have remained at home. The NHS has quite rightly been applauded and appreciated at this time and there are so many more.

I’ve been especially impressed by our schools and their teams who have largely been open throughout this period to be provide care for key worker families and vulnerable children. Even at weekends and during this past half term holiday they have been tirelessly supporting their local communities. Staying alert to the needs of our young, they have shown their commitment and care. I want to express my huge gratitude to them!

As we move into June we may be seeing more children returning to schools having been home-schooled for a time. This will not be without fear for some and a need to be especially alert to physical dangers. Whatever the situation we find ourselves to be in at this point, we are reminded that we have a Comforter, an Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who strengthens and encourages our faith even at times of doubt and anxiety.

Whether still at home and isolated or beginning a return to wider community life, may you find yourself being alert for and recognising the one who stands alongside you, the Spirit, who is friend, guardian and comforter.

With every good wish,
Bishop Ruth



View south from the church

FUTURE SERVICES

I am expecting all of our services in June to be by telephone. Colin Maggs begins our summer season on Trinity Sunday (7th June). It is possible that we might be able to worship in church from July, or possibly August; we will let you know as the situation develops.

If permitted, Rev Mark Searle will take our Patronal Festival service at Langridge on 19th July at 4pm. I have billed this as Café Church, and we will see what it is possible to do on the day.

I think it is unlikely that we will be able to share a Lammas loaf on 2nd August. Our fifth Sunday service on 30th August will be at 10 am, giving everyone a short lie-in for Bank Holiday weekend. TD

LANGRIDGE SERVICES June to August 2020

Date	Time	Type of Service	Preacher
June 7	9.30	MP BCP Trinity Sunday	Mr Colin Maggs
June 14	9.30	HC CW	Revd Mark Searle
June 21	9.30	Family Service	Revd Antony Claridge
June 28	9.30	HC BCP	Revd Robert Webb
July 5	9.30	MP BCP	Canon Roger Clifton
July 12	9.30	HC CW	Revd Mark Searle/ASW
July 19	4pm	Patronal Festival –Café Church	Revd Mark Searle
July 26	9.30	HC BCP	Canon John Crowe
August 2	9.30	Lammas MP BCP	TBD
August 9	9.30	HC CW	Revd Mark Searle/ASW
August 16	9.30	Family Service	Revd Antony Claridge
August 23	9.30	HC BCP	Revd Robert Webb
August 30	10.00	HC CW?	Revd Geraldine Kirk

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter (September to November) please contact Liz White regarding Church matters or the Friends' news. We would like to hear about all items of interest – comments, events or special occasions by 21 August 2020.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Treasurer	Laura Somodi	07816 961951
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