

St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter December 2018 – February 2019

Letter from Revd Mark Searle
Rector of All Saints, Weston



Hope for the future?

The Brexit roller coaster might be coming into land sometime soon. The rattle of pressured negotiations goes in fits and starts. However you voted and where-ever you stand now, we can't escape that we are all in this together. Excited, heart broken, determined or maybe even fearful as we step into the unknown. Some are stock piling, others preparing to move out of the country (at least until the dust has settled). As I write this the draft proposals are on the table. In a few weeks, we could be moving forward towards Brexit or even getting ready for a general election.

Each day we get bombarded with another opinion about whether the direction is right or wrong. A lot is ill informed or based on little more than rumours. Whatever angle you view it from the other perspective is often portrayed as one to be feared.

As a Christian community we have something that goes beyond the political divide. Beyond borders and class, beyond passing ideologies and even beyond history. When Jesus talks about the Kingdom of God he says it is both "here" and "near". He describes it almost as a wind that can blow where it wants. Beyond the confines of a church building, an hour on a Sunday or any man made boundary. Interestingly the Holy Spirit is described in a similar way. In the Old Testament the "*Ruach*" is the breath or life of God and is translated as "Spirit". In the New Testament the "*Pneuma*" is the Holy Spirit of God, the one who Jesus promises. As followers of Jesus we are both filled with the Holy Spirit, and we follow the Holy Spirit's lead in the world as we seek first the kingdom.

So how as Christians are we suppose to respond to the prevailing winds of fear and factionalism? The answer is that we should not respond! It is not a question of changing our response, but changing who we are looking at. In 2 Cor 3:17 it says, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." Jesus also declares his peace to us in John 20:21. We get there by changing our focus, by fixing our eyes on him, we gaze upon Jesus and we are transformed into his likeness. Fear is displaced by peace and oppression pushed out by freedom.

As we draw closer to Christmas, think again about the wonder of God with us. Don't be overwhelmed by that which causes fear and divides us. Instead let us gather again around the history shaper, Jesus, who fills us with his Holy Spirit. Going into the world as carriers of his peace. **Whatever happens with Brexit, I pray for you that, "the peace of Christ, that passes all understanding would guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."**

Mark Searle

FRIENDS OF LANGRIDGE

The Friends continue to provide refreshments after some services each month so that we can all relax together and chat with coffee or, as we did for the November Family Service, with a delicious mug of soup with bread and cheese.

We met in the Village Hall for a really interesting talk on The Road to Santiago given by Tim Stuckes on 18 September. He gave a fascinating insight into this historic journey, made by pilgrims over many centuries. across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela from many parts of Europe. We were given a perspective of a modern pilgrimage through his own vivid experiences which he made in 2015 and his final arrival at the cathedral in Santiago.

PAST SERVICES

Highlights of the last three months' services have been the Harvest Festival service, led by Mark Searle and followed by the usual epic auction of produce – once again with our local auctioneer Harry Umpleby. Our Remembrance Service on 11th November (exactly 100 years after the end of the First World War) led by Revd Canon Roger Clifton.



Remembrance Sunday

As ever, we have been able to benefit from an impressive array of local clergy and the All Saints Weston lay team, making for another memorable sequence of services. And on 21st October, Hilary Long joined us to talk about the work of the Genesis Trust. This was a fascinating talk, and we have lots of information about Genesis for anyone who missed it.

HAPPY AND SAD OCCASIONS

Things have been busy at Langridge. On September, Mark Searle blessed the wedding of Anthony Tobin and Deirdre Pelham-Reid (“Dee and Tobes”), two friends of Rev. Judith Harries, who were moved to celebrate their wedding in our very special valley location.

On 28 October, Revd. Geraldine Kirk baptised Harrison Hodge, the youngest member of the Bravin family (with whom many of you will be familiar). The service was a happy and memorably chaotic occasion, with approximately 28 children in the congregation (an estimate since none of them would stand still!).

Harrison with Victoria, Daniel & Jacob and the Revd Geraldine Kirk



Sadly, we have lost some of our dearest and longest standing supporters in recent months. The funeral took place at Langridge on 3rd September of Gaye Gibbs. Later that month, the church was packed to overflowing on 27th September for the thanksgiving service for Peter Pelly whose expertise and valued commitment to Langridge will be remembered; his ashes will be interred at Langridge in December. Our dedicated organist, dear Ann Flewitt, also died in August and her ashes will also be interred at Langridge. And on 25th October there was a thanksgiving service for Margaret Britton (Chris' late wife) who died earlier that month. Like the Pellys, the Brittons had lived in the Valley for many years and Margaret had played an active role in the early years of the Friends.

T Davies

PETER PELLY

This message is to thank the many friends who sent such beautiful cards and letters on hearing that Peter had died. They mean such a lot to me. Each, in its own way, expressed love and respect for a lovely man who loved living in such a beautiful valley among such good friends.

Thank you all. *Joanna*



The congregation gathering for Peter's Service

PAST EVENTS

An energetic group met at the church for the Autumn churchyard clearing on a sunny November day and achieved a remarkable amount over the morning. The inside of the church also saw great activity with cleaning and polishing.



FUTURE SERVICES

Christmas is almost upon us. This year the Christmas Carol service is on 16th December at 3 pm and will be led by Rev. Mark Searle. Our Christingle service this year will be on 23rd December at 11 am. On Christmas morning, we have Holy Communion at 9:00 am with Rev. Nigel Rawlinson (please note the earlier time, so that Nigel can get to ASW in time to take their 10:30 service).

Last August, Mark pioneered with us a participative Bible study-based morning service, which proved to be very worthwhile. On 30th December (at 9:30) we have a similar, reflective, service which will give you a chance to step away from the hurly-burly following Christmas 2018, and to draw some lessons from the events after Christ's birth 2,000 years ago.

The PCC feels that it would be helpful for each week's service at Langridge to be at the same time. Therefore, from January 2019 onwards, all services at Langridge, including those on the third Sunday, will be at 9:30 am (with the occasional exception). Please make your views known to a member of the PCC if you are not happy about this change.

On 20 January (at 9:30 as above), we will be pleased to welcome to our service a team of visiting speakers from the Gideons. Do please come along, and bring your Bible!

Tony Davies

At the recent Bath Deanery Synod in October our Archdeacon, the Venerable Adrian Youings, was advocating the importance of Discipleship and it is encouraging to read this letter of welcome from the Diocese.

Julia Hill has been commissioned as Discipleship Team Leader for the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

We are delighted to announce that Julia Hill has been commissioned as Discipleship Team Leader for the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Julia has been working for the diocese since April 2018 as Lay Ministry Developer.

In her new role Julia will encourage the growth of discipleship within the churches of the diocese. A key part of this will be to encourage and enable a diverse range of opportunities for people to explore Christian discipleship.

Julia says, "I am so pleased to be joining the discipleship team, working to support people across the diocese as they seek to follow Jesus as individuals and as churches. I have had the privilege of working alongside the team in my previous role and so know what a wealth of expertise and commitment it contains. I look forward to working with the team to continue to develop close relationships with deaneries, benefices and parishes across the diocese."

Jane Chamberlain, Head of Ministry for Mission adds, "We are delighted that Julia has responded to God's call on her life and is willing to lead the discipleship team as we seek to enable people to be confident, courageous disciples."

Julia will work alongside the team leaders of vocations, mission, training and pioneering and evangelism to ensure an effective and integrated approach to parish resourcing and development across the diocese.

Julia began her new role on Monday 5 November, without any sparklers present, and was commissioned in the Bishops Chapel on Tuesday 6 November.

Julia joined Bath and Wells earlier this year from the Church Urban Fund where, in partnership with the Church of England she developed a set of online resources to help churches work effectively with volunteers. She also worked for the Fund's subsidiary charity, Just Finance Foundation, developing resources around financial inclusion.

December Letter from Bishop Ruth

God with us

Well, we are into the frantic pressie-buying month of December now. The American 'Black Friday' tradition appears to be firmly a part of our own pattern and has brought the search for the perfect Christmas present yet earlier in our calendar. Parish and school Christmas Fayres offer us home-made, Fairtrade, recycled and singular alternatives. And increasingly the inequalities within our economy become more apparent as people risk debt to bring a smile to their child's face.

When I was a parish priest we found that many of our single parents felt trapped by the pressure of keeping up with those around them. We tried to introduce a maximum spend for all our congregational and family present buying in order to bring some parity. It wasn't easy!

I'm reminded at this time of year of the line that we are seeing more frequently, accompanying invitations to weddings and Birthday parties: **'No presents required, just your presence!'**

It makes me think about what Christmas really means. During this time of preparation and waiting for the big day to arrive, many of us will sing the words of that Advent hymn, 'O come, O come, Emmanuel', a 12th century hymn that invites God to fulfil his prophecy to his people. Will we really take in those words?

'Emmanuel' means 'God with us', such an important and comforting phrase in these times of uncertainty and anxiety, as we wonder what the new year will bring.

Christmas we know is a time when people can feel lonely, disappointed, stressed. There are reputedly more suicides and marriage breakdowns during the course of this holiday period. One of the best Christmas presents we can offer then must surely be that of hospitality, a listening ear and simply our 'presence' among those who feel forgotten, rejected or overlooked.

In so doing we will find God's own present to us this Christmas, as in any and all other Christmases, His presence. The God to whom "every animal of the forest and the cattle on a thousand hills, belongs" (Psalm 50) has given us the best present of all –

He is with us.

The Right Reverend Ruth Worsley

FUTURE EVENTS

The popular **2nd Saturdays** will continue –the next being on 8th December in the Hall.

RIDE+STRIDE

I warned readers of the last newsletter about my plan to do the 2018 Ride+Stride later in the year (because of being on holiday). With 2018 ebbing away, I plan to do my ride on New Year's Eve. Further details and sponsorship forms will follow!

Tony Davies

QUIET GARDENS

Many of us enjoy peace in the countryside and in gardens, as within this beautiful Valley and Church at Langridge, where we are able to find solace and calm.

The Quiet Garden Movement founded a Trust many years ago and has links with other countries as well as the UK. If you are not familiar with them their quarterly Newsletter 'Quiet Places' makes a good introduction to their philosophy and many activities

Newsletter: <https://quietgarden.org/news>

www.quietgarden.org

LANGRIDGE SERVICES			
December 2018 – February 2019			
Date 2018	Time	Type of Service	Preacher/Leader
December 2	9.30	HC BCP	Revd A Claridge
December 9	9.30	MP BCP	Mr T Peryer
December 16	3 pm	Carol Service	Revd M Searle
December 23	11 am	Christingle	Mr T Peryer
December 25	9.00	Christmas Day HC	Revd Preb N Rawlinson
December 30	9.30	Reflective Service	Mr T Davies
2019			
January 6	9.30	HC BCP	Rev A Claridge
January 13	9.30	MP BCP	Mr C Maggs
January 20	9.30	Family Service	The Gideons/ Mrs S Couchman
January 27	9.30	HC CW	Rev M Searle
February 3	9.30	HC BCP	Rev R Clifton
February 10	9.30	MP BCP	Mr T Peryer
February 17	9.30	Reflective Service	Dr C Jones
February 24	9.30	Candlemas HC/CW	Rev M Searle

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter (March to May) 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 15 February.

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

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