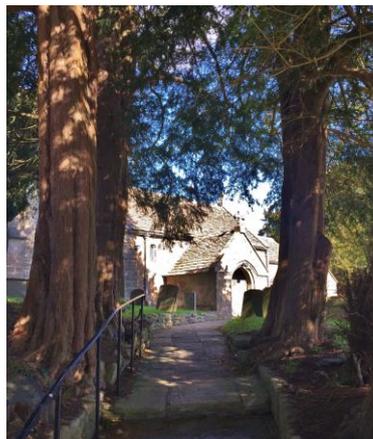


St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter December 2020 – February 2021

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

December 2020



Steps to the porch

ARE WE THERE YET?

If you've ever travelled in a car with young children, then you will recognise this question. Are we there yet? It's a question that expresses the frustration of being on a journey when you are not in the driving seat. But that childhood frustration of just wanting to arrive, stays with us as adults.

Are we there yet?

It's a question I find myself asking in these strange days that we are living in. Are we there yet? Will lockdown be extended? When will the vaccine be delivered? Who will it be delivered to? Will it work!? These are all valid questions of the day. But behind them is a lack of control over the journey and the deep-seated fear of the unknown.

In the last eight months we've had to discover new ways of meeting as Christian communities, new ways of shopping and new ways of talking to our relatives and friends. These things have all been part of the journey, and will probably be part of the journey and maybe even the destination for many years to come.

As much as our immediate questions are entirely valid, I also want us to look at another question together. It's a question that reframes our current circumstances. The question is this, who is in your driving seat? With all the noise and the fear of our current circumstances, we can feel out of control, and we just want to know when it will end. But the more important question on this journey, wherever it will lead and whenever it may end is who are you going to take the journey with?

Jesus says I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the Father except through me. If we're going to navigate the season well, then we need to do so walking in step with and following the way of Jesus Christ. Who's in your driving seat?

Mark Searle

Rector of All Saints Weston, Bath, with Langridge and North Stoke
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SERVICES AT LANGRIDGE DURING THE AUTUMN

Over the last three months, the Sunday services at St Mary Magdalene Langridge have been a mixture: eight telephone services, live services with a Zoom alternative on three occasions, and two very special services compiled by Sarah Couchman. Once again all of our service leaders seem to have enjoyed the challenges of leading services in novel ways.

On September 26th there was a Memorial service in church for Raymond Nery, Jenny Beazley's brother, who had died earlier that month in Spain. It was good to see Jenny's family brought together to meet on that day, despite the constraints in place at this time.

RECENT SERVICES

Sarah Couchman created a **Remembrance Service** on November 8th, by Zoom, in which the Welsh Guards led the two minutes silence, and a church choir sang "God is love". The following Sunday she compiled a Sanctuary service via YouTube for All Saints Weston and others, which was a beautiful presentation of Langridge and its church, and contained moving contributions from some of our congregation. I have a DVD copy of the service available to lend to anyone who missed it and you can also see it on the All Saints Church website.



We will Remember them

I think everyone would like to join me in thanking Irene Godwin who, with Alecia Baines, regularly create the beautiful flower arrangements in church. Their welcome in the porch is uplifting in these times for those who visit the church. LW

EVENTS

Thanks to Victoria Humphries, and with careful planning, it was possible to hold Second Saturday in September. Almost 20 of the "regulars" enjoyed sharing coffee and cakes in a socially distanced way in Langridge Village Hall. At present, however, it is not clear when we will next be able to resume holding the event.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting took place by Zoom on 6th October. We welcome Mandy Osborne as our new PCC Secretary. Mark Searle spoke at the meeting of the challenges we face, urging all to be loving, hopeful and willing to try new things.

Tony Davies



View south from the churchyard

FUTURE SERVICES

At the time of writing we are not permitted to hold services in church, although there is hope of some relaxation in restrictions in December. We will definitely have a Carol Service (either live or remote) on December 20th; our service on Christmas Day may well be pre-recorded for the congregation to watch at home.

Some services in the New Year may be live, others remote. We will seek to be flexible in the context of what is safe and legal.

Michael Messer, from St Martin's North Stoke, has a great talent for producing DVD's with a selection of hymns, psalms and prayers for home viewing during these difficult times. Tony Davies has a library of Michael's DVD's and will be happy to circulate them on request.

MEMORY CORNER

The following is a contribution by Ros Smallwood. She and Mike joined the Langridge congregation in the 1990's and have both contributed so much to the life of the church – Ros through her time as churchwarden and providing her artistic talents, and Mike for his resourcefulness and electrical expertise within and without. Thankyou.

COVID -19; not all bad?

This virus affects everyone, young and old, in so many ways, mostly in a bad way but it has also brought out the best in many communities.

Mike and I, being in the self-isolating age group, dutifully locked down on March 23. Straight away we had offers from neighbours and friends to help with shopping and any thing else we might need. Through the letter box came leaflets from organisations and volunteers with more offers and useful contact numbers. I had always meant to try online grocery shopping as loaded trolleys in sloping supermarket car parks had become less manageable but, of course, delivery slots were unobtainable. Our daughter had helpfully diverted her London supermarket delivery to our address to start with as a 'one off' so we enjoyed a different menu but didn't actually need the two bags of cat litter included.

As the days progressed, we realised how much friendly help there was in our area and, now that the sun had come out with beautiful spring weather, one neighbour suggested we take our morning coffee into our front gardens. As we live on the outside of a bend in our road we could still be in our own property, self-distancing, but enjoying each others company and swap notes on which farm shops, restaurants etc were delivering. It also meant that any of us living alone wouldn't have to spend whole days with nobody to talk to.

11 o'clock coffee carried on throughout the summer, weather permitting. From July, shops and services opened up gradually. We were less restricted. By September, the rumour that the virus would come back to bite us was becoming a reality. Mike and I were looking forward to our Golden Wedding in October but were unable to make any plans as our relations were in Tier Two or abroad, parties could only meet in small numbers and travel wasn't encouraged so we were resigned to a What's App or Facetime celebration. Where would everyone have been without this technology?

The Saturday of our anniversary was damp but not raining when we were asked to come outside. There in the driveway were our neighbours with a table laden with gifts, three yellow (golden) balloons and a glorious cake among them. It made me wonder....would we have had such a surprise if 2020 had been Covid-19 free



Congratulations

It did occur to me that from Langridge Church point of view, the virus has helped to increase our numbers at some services by using the telephone and zoom. Virtual services are more accessible for some people who for whatever reason do not come to services in the church.

NB. This is only possible at Langridge because of the skill of Tony. Covid has helped here!

Ros Smallwood

Letter to the Nation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York

Dear Friends,

These are deeply challenging and difficult times for us all. When we are surrounded by fear and suffering, it can be hard to feel hopeful. This coming winter feels like it will be longer and darker than usual.

There is a story in the Bible where Jesus and his disciples are caught in a storm. The disciples are understandably terrified as the wind and waves threaten to overpower them. ‘Why are you so afraid?’, Jesus asks. This year, we too have been caught in a storm which often feels overwhelming. And yet we can look to Jesus, in the boat with us, who calms the storm and comforts us in our fear.

We are writing to share our belief that whoever you are, and whatever you happen to believe, you are loved by God. Beyond measure. We also want you to know that we are praying for you, particularly asking that Christ’s love will comfort us, calm our fears, and lead our nation and our world through this terrible pandemic. Starting this week, we have asked every church to pray each day at 6pm. We invite you to join with us. You’ll be able to find simple resources on the Church of England website and social media channels.

There are three other responses that we want to encourage everyone to consider – First, let’s be calm. By only buying what we need and not hoarding, or by reaching out to our neighbours as we did during the first lockdown, we can be stronger together in ways that are impossible if we go it alone. When things go wrong – as they always will with such complex challenges – let us look for good and right ways forward together.

Secondly, let’s be courageous. There are many reasons to be fearful at the moment, but the story of Christ calming the waves calls us to give our fears to Jesus and have faith in Him. The British willingness just to get on with things is one of our very best characteristics – let us not be paralysed by fear. We will all need each other’s courage in the months to come.

Thirdly, let’s be compassionate. So many of us are holding so much pain – our own and the pain of those we love. We will need to be gentle, kind and patient with each other. In the first wave we showed we are a nation of compassion and kindness. Let’s dig deep and keep that love for our neighbours strong in this second time of struggle.

Even though there is much darkness around us, there are also many points of light in the weeks ahead.

This month we have held Remembrance Day. As we remembered the courage and sacrifice of those who gave everything for this nation in war, we are also reminded of the possibility for hope after destruction, of new life after suffering. In the coming weeks, there are great religious ceremonies. For Hindus, Sikhs and Jains there is Diwali, the festival of light. Sikhs will celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak. The Jewish community will observe Hanukkah. Many Muslim communities have just celebrated Eid-e-Milad, the anniversary of the birth of Muhammad. Soon it will be Christmas. At his birth Jesus was also called Emmanuel. It’s a word that appears in lots of carols. It means ‘God is with us’. And this is the message of Christmas:

in Jesus, God is with us, sharing our darkness and our struggles, bringing comfort and joy. It is the source of our hope. As the Bible says: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:5) Let us shine in the darkness of this winter. May God bless you and keep you, and all those you love.

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby
The Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell

Archbishop of Canterbury

Archbishop of York

LAMBETH PALACE, LONDON SE1 7JU

November 2020

PAST EVENTS

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting took place by Zoom on 6th October. We welcome Mandy Osborne as our new PCC Secretary. Mark Searle spoke at the meeting of the challenges we face, urging all to be loving, hopeful and willing to try new things.

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A small team carried out some churchyard clearance in October. We are gradually winning the battle against the ivy, and the churchyard is in good condition, but there are more tasks to be done.

Tony Davies

I would to take this opportunity to say how grateful we are for all the hard work which Tony Davies, our Churchwarden, has continually undertaken during this very testing period. He has enabled the weekly services to take place in a variety of ways, as well the numerous endless tasks required in his role - in contacting people, administration and dealing with the fabric of the church and churchyard.

LW

Archdeaconry Days

The Diocese has organised some “Archdeaconry Days”, which will take place over the week of **10 -16 January 2021**, principally online but with offline options for those who are not able to access materials online.

This year they have chosen to focus on prayer, and to run the days early in the New Year so that we can begin 2021 as we mean to go on – in prayer and together. The theme is **Prayer - Everyone, Everywhere!** and as is so often the case with the Everyday Faith themes, it is deceptively simple but central to how we live out our faith. Prayer is the foundation of our relationship with God and yet many people, lack confidence in bringing themselves before God in prayer, even though they may have had decades of joining in with prayer during regular worship.

The pattern of the week follows, and they have gone for short sessions to avoid the usual online fatigue:-

Sunday 10 January - worship

- A recorded non-Eucharistic service from the Cathedral of around 30 minutes, focused on prayer, including a reflection from Bishop Ruth, inviting people across the diocese to join together in exploring prayer over the coming week.
- Bishop Ruth's short reflection and invitation will also be available as a separate package for those who would like to weave it into their own offering for that day.
- **Monday 11 - Friday 15 January – inspiration and experimentation**
 - A short video will be released each day, featuring people from across the diocese talking about the ways that they like to pray. They will reflect a range of contexts and ages and each day will have a theme: Prayer and **Nature**; Prayer and the **Digital** World; Prayer and **Arts**; Prayer and the **Bible**; Prayer and **People**. The videos are designed to inspire and will be accompanied by a few suggestions of things that people could try themselves.
 - There will also be a background video on 'Why pray?' with personal reflections from people – particularly to help those who perhaps haven't reflected on the nature and range of prayer.
- **Saturday 16 January – discussion and reflection together**
 - There will be sessions on the Saturday to bring people together to hear more about prayer and have a chance (in breakout rooms) to discuss what they have tried/learned/experimented with during the week. This will also be a chance to reinforce the materials that are available to support them in developing patterns of prayer.
 - As always, the sessions will encourage people across a particular archdeaconry area to gather together but will be open to all. When people sign up to the Archdeaconry Days they will receive the joining instructions, which will include an option to join by UK phone number.
 - 10.00am to 11.00 am – hosted by the Archdeacon of Bath
 - 11.30am to 12.30pm – hosted by the Archdeacon of Wells
 - 2.00pm to 3.00pm – hosted by the Archdeacon of Taunton

They will be providing a simple guide for groups with ideas to help any regular home/prayer/Bible study groups make the journey through the week together.

To receive all the materials and links at the right time, please contact : Tony Davies or Liz White.

If you have any questions about this event, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Julia Hill julia.hill@bathwells.anglican.org who will be able to answer most questions.

LANGRIDGE SERVICES
December 2020 – March 2021

Date	Time	Type of Service	Preacher
December 6	9.30	BCP HC Telephone	Revd A Claridge tbc
December 13	11.00	Family Service - Christingle Live if possible	Mr T Peryer
December 20	3pm	Carol Service TBD	Revd M Searle
December 25 Christmas Day	9.30	Christmas Service Pre-recorded	Revd M Searle
December 27	9.30	BCP HC Live if possible	Revd R Webb
2021			
January 3	9.30	BCP MP Telephone	Mr C. Maggs
January 10	9.30	CW HC Live	ASW
January 17	9.30	CW MP Telephone	Revd J Harries
January 24	9.30	BCP HC Telephone	Revd Canon J Crowe
January 31	9.30	Candlemas TBD	TBD
February 7	9.30	BCP MP Telephone	Revd A Claridge tbc
February 14	9.30	CW HC Live	ASW
February 21	9.30	Reflective pre-Lent course Telephone	Langridge congregation
February 28	9.30	BCP HC Live	Revd R Webb

Live = Service in Church

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter March - June please contact Liz White regarding Church matters, and for the Friends' news. We would like to hear about all items of interest – comments, events or special occasions by 15 February 2021.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Church Warden	Tony Davies	01225 336124
Treasurer	Laura Somodi	07816 961951
Langridge Friends & Newsletter editor	Liz White	01225 744852

You can follow current news over the next three months on our website.
The websites for All Saints and the Diocesan news are also both informative.

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

All Saints Church, Weston <https://www.allsaints.org.uk/churchlive>

Diocese of Bath and Wells <https://www.allsaintsonline.org.uk>