

St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter March to May 2022

**Letter from Tom Peyer
Lay Reader, All Saints, Weston**

March 2022



Spring flowers in the porch

Langridge newsletter

As I write this, I'm waiting in for Eunice - Storm Eunice that is. The Met Office has issued a rare red warning with winds forecast of up to 90mph. So later today, I'll be out in the garden trying to secure any freestanding furniture and other items (including the grandchildren's trampoline which has already been damaged in an earlier storm).

There are other kinds of storms out there today as well. Every few hours, I check to see if the storms of war have broken out over the Ukraine and if the tanks are rolling into Kiev, a city I once visited with Patrick Whitworth and Paul Bright. Has the Covid storm finally subsided after two years or can we expect a resurgence later in the year. And what about the storms that are gathering but we can't see them yet? Storms that may affect the whole world or it may be just our world which is suddenly battered and up-ended.

Jesus and his disciples knew a thing or two about storms. The Sea of Galilee is not really a sea, but its weather pattern is unpredictable and fierce storms can suddenly rise up. Even though some of Jesus' close followers were experienced fishermen that did not mean they were immune from fear in a storm. Mind you that could not be said of St Paul. He seems to have been fearless in a storm. He tells us in one of his letters that he has been shipwrecked three times, and St Luke gives us in Acts a very dramatic account of one of those shipwrecks when he was washed ashore on the island of Malta. In that storm he was given great peace and presence of mind.

Fear and anxiety in the middle of storms is a natural, universal experience. But for the Christian whose faith runs deep the storms and squalls that come our way cannot be the last word. As the old hymn says:

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure where the sea billows roll
Fastened to the rock that cannot move,
Grounded, firm and deep in the Saviour's love.*

As I said at the beginning, I am writing this before the arrival of Storm Eunice. You will be reading it, days and weeks after it has passed. I believe I can confidently say that St Mary Magdalene Church Langridge will still be standing! May that also be true of us and our faith when the storms come.

Tom Peyer

Tony Davies' Newsletter Articles February 2022

RECENT SERVICES

We have continued with live services, with three additional worshippers regularly using the Zoom alternative. We practise sensible social distancing, and sanitiser is available. We sing hymns, but do not yet share the wine at Communion.

We are, as ever, very grateful to the dedicated team of clergy and lay readers who lead our services. Rev David Parr led our Christmas Carol Service; Sarah Couchman again led Christingle, with Tom Peryer and it was a joy to have the children joining in with us; and Archdeacon Adrian Youngs very kindly led our Christmas Day Communion service.

FUTURE SERVICES

The usual service pattern will continue, with Zoom on offer whenever we can.

Sarah Couchman will once again lead our Mothering Sunday service on 27th March. At Eastertide, Judith Harries will take our service on Palm Sunday (10th April), Robert Webb will lead our Maundy Thursday service at 6 pm on 14th April and Richard Hunt will preside over Easter Sunday's Holy Communion.

There will be no service at Langridge on 29th May if, as is planned, the postponed Bath Half takes place that morning.

PAST EVENTS

Jules Addison and his partner Anne-Marie performed a fascinating cello and piano duet recital for us in late November. The sound of Anne-Marie's cello filling our little church was absolutely stunning!

At the service on 6th February, Jane White gave a compelling talk about the charity Christians Against Poverty, which has a key role in helping people with debt problems. Their help might involve months of negotiation with creditors, or just some advice on how to do practical budgeting.



Second Saturday continues on a monthly basis, and is always enjoyed by all. We were sad to lose one of our regulars, Tony Pinnegar, who sadly died in January after a short illness.

FUTURE EVENTS

Lent begins on 2nd March. We are planning once again to run a Lent course jointly with St Martin's North Stoke, led by Robin Lewis and Peter Durman.

There will be a churchyard clearing/church cleaning session from 10 a.m. to noon on the morning of Saturday 30th April

On Saturday 7 May there will be a **Quiet Day** at the church which will kindly be led again by Liz Bavin from All Saints Church. Check our website for details and do contact us if you would like to join us. We look forward to seeing you.

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on Tuesday 17th May at Langridge Village Hall. This will be your chance to hear an update on the church's activities and finances, and to join the discussion about the future of our church and parish:

THE FUTURE OF LANGRIDGE CHURCH

You will know that our PCC has been meeting regularly over the past few months, with the guidance of Archdeacon Adrian Youings, to discuss the future of our church. This has been provoked by the end of Tony Davies' six year term as churchwarden, coincidentally with the resignation of the Rector.

We have discussed many options, ranging from the closure of the church, it becoming a festival church (with services only at festival times), or continuing with regular worship – either as a separate parish or as a 'chapel of ease' (daughter church) of All Saints Weston.

The survey that we carried out over the winter identified a groundswell of support for our church, and a number of volunteers to help with practical tasks. However it is fair to say that no magic solution emerged to our lack of lay leadership.

At the time of writing, intensive discussions about the future are going on both amongst the Langridge team and with ASW. It would be good to be able to convey the likely outcome of those discussions in the Parish Profile...

THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW RECTOR

Sadly, Mark Searle resigned as our Rector with effect from the end of 2021. We offer Mark and Meghan, and their family, our sincere good wishes and prayers for their future life together.

The process of finding a new Rector involves discussions amongst the three parishes, both separately and together, to discern their vision for the role, which will be written up in what is called a 'Parish Profile'. It is currently hoped to complete the Profile in March, with a view to advertising, and then interviewing candidates in May or June, so that a new Rector might be able to join us in the Autumn.

If you would like to play your part in the process, please let us have your views on this important question: **“What would you like to see as the main skills and qualities of our next church leader?”**. Please give your suggestions to, or send them by e-mail to, Tony Davies by 4th March if possible. *(address on last page)*

Tony Davies



Frosty Morning across the Valley

MEMORY CORNER

The experiences of these recent long months have been many and varied but, for those fortunate to have been able to come to this beautiful church, there has been the opportunity to find solace and inspiration as Joanna's words so beautifully show.

THE CHURCH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE, LANGRIDGE 2020 – 2022

For nine hundred years and more
It has stood there, strong, secure,
The square squat tower
Pointing up to the hills and sky.
For two years or so the doors were closed –
Not locked, but offering no welcome:
“Keep apart, wear a mask, do not touch”.
Not the message we wanted to read.

But faith was strong, and led us along
Through those who know the mysterious ways
Of Internet, Zoom and new use of Phone,
By staying at home, connected to each other
In love and prayers, renewing our faith;
Distance did not keep us apart.

Now doors are open, we can enter in,
Take off our masks, sing our hymns
Of thanksgiving and praise
And light a candle – a flame of hope
At home or in God's house.
We have kept our faith alive – we have survived.

Joanna Pelly



The light of a star to guide us

from Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton

What will 2022 bring I wonder? Two years ago Covid was just a vague murmur coming from the East. How could we have known it would have such an impact or for so long?

How might this year be different? Well, there is much to look forward to. We expect to have a new diocesan bishop joining us. We will be celebrating 70 years of the Queen's reign. The World Cup is on... and we have a chance! And then there are all the other excitements of anniversaries, milestones and hopes and dreams we all have.

As we begin this new year my mind turns to those Eastern travellers long ago who saw a star in the sky, set out on an uncharted journey which took maybe up to two years, and eventually found a King. Not the sort of king expected but One who opened up new horizons for the whole world. One who offers us love, forgiveness and a way back to God.

At this time when we are asking questions that search for deeper meaning, this seems a story which resonates. What sort of journey will you take this year? At a recent clergy pre-Advent retreat we were reminded that it is not so much us walking with God but rather God walking with us. So, no matter what twists and turns the road takes, or even if we slip from following in God's Way, He will never give up on us and will never let us walk alone.

This year, as last, we shall be seeking to dwell on some words from scripture and allow them to permeate into our being. The following verses from that passage, seem to offer us the light of a star to guide us as we navigate our journey in the year to come.

'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

Philippians 4: 4-7

May you know God's presence and grace as He walks with you into this New Year!

With love
+Ruth



Snowdrops welcoming spring at St Mary Magdalene Church

Many of you will remember the years that the Revd Prebendary Patrick Whitworth was Rector of All Saints, Weston. He has been the author of many books and some of us from Langridge attended the book signing in Bath Abbey of his latest one - **And did those feet**. This, a very large book, covers the story and character of the English Church from AD200 -2020.

<https://allsaintsweston.churchinsight.com/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=286500>

Once again our very sincere thanks go to our Churchwarden, Tony Davies who has contributed so much to the life of our Church over these testing months, both during Lockdown and now with plans for the future of our Parish.

LW

LANGRIDGE SERVICES			
March to May 2022			
Date	Time	Type of Service	Preacher
March 6	9.30	BCP MP	Mr Colin Maggs
March 13	9.30	CW HC	Revd D Parr
March 20	9.30	BCP HC	Revd R Clifton
March 27	9.30	CW MP Mothering Sunday	Mrs S Couchman
April 3	9.30	BCP MP	Revd A Claridge
April 10	9.30	CW HC Palm Sunday	Revd J Harries
April 14	6pm	BCP Maundy Thursday	Revd R Webb
April 17	9.30	CW HC Easter Sunday	Revd R Hunt (hopefully)
April 24	9.30	CW MP	Mr T Peryer tbc
May 1 st	9.30	BCP MP	Revd A Claridge
May 8	9.30	CW HC	Revd J Harries
May 15	9.30	CW MP	Revd R Clifton
May 22	9.30	BCP HC Rogation Sunday	Revd R Webb
May 29	9.30	CW HC	Cancelled due to Bath Half

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter June to August 2022 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 **22 May 2022** .

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