

St Mary Magdalene Langridge

Langridge Parish Newsletter June – August 2022

**Letter from Robin Lewis
Lay Reader All Saints, Weston**

June 2022



Langridge Newsletter

If you have followed any news recently, it cannot have escaped your notice that we shall soon celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Whether one is royalist or republican we cannot but admire Her Majesty's lifelong commitment service. Her dedication and self-sacrifice is exemplary. After all, who, honestly, would wish to be surrounded by security and pursued by press and public whenever one steps outside, to have to meet and greet, witness displays, stand for hours with a smile and a ready word knowing that each will be treasured and that those to whom you speak will talk of the experience for the rest of their lives. 'Dining out' on royal events can pass into family history. An elderly neighbour used to show, with pride, a personal letter from Queen Victoria to her grandfather! Some people have described the royal bubble as a prison. Modern monarchy is very different from the mediaeval ideas of sovereignty and absolute power. Who'd really want to be the Head of State, especially when the honour is but 'an accident of birth'.

The Queen has a strong Christian faith. She has assured her people of her prayers; those of us who pray, regularly pray for her. Not for nothing does the prayerbook enjoin us to pray for our Queen and Royal family. If the news is at all reliable, and on this it almost certainly is, Elizabeth Regina will undoubtedly need our prayers before and during Her Jubilee Celebrations as she continues to serve her country for her whole life.

Her Majesty is to be congratulated and admired for heading our land, almost faultlessly, through the last seventy, turbulent years. There has been so much change society norms these days would have been almost impossible to imagine seven decades ago and the changes will continue. We had only to see the Prince of Wales reading the Queen's Speech at the State Opening of Parliament to realise that one special era is closing. We do not know what the next will hold.

What is true for the nation is also true locally. The parish is about to experience changes. Our long-serving and faithful Church Warden, Tony Davies, will be retiring at the end of May. Many, many thanks are due to him for quietly shouldering scores and scores of burdens, seen and unseen. No obvious successor has yet emerged. Concurrently the entire Benefice St Mary's Langridge, St Martin's North Stoke and All Saints' Weston seeks a new Rector. The advertisements have generated a lot of interest so we await developments. Interviews are in early June.

In these days, it is as important as it is comforting to remember the encouragement St Peter gave in his epistle that we should 'Cast all our cares on Him [that is Christ] because He cares for us' [I Peter 5.7]. We can also recall that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever [Hebrews 13.8]. In these changing times we can have confidence and enjoy peace of mind and heart through trusting our Lord's promises. He is only a prayer away.

Do have a great summer and an excellent Jubilee weekend.

Robin Lewis

PAST SERVICES

We had an inspirational speaker from Christians Against Poverty on 6th February. Sarah Couchman led us for a special service on Mothering Sunday.

Our services have continued throughout this difficult period with our visiting clergy and the congregation taking great care and we feel we are nearly back to normal. We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed with the sound systems which has enabled those who could not attend the church to still join us via zoom.

The joint Langridge/North Stoke Lent course, ably led by Robin Lewis, was a great success, and the attendees agreed to continue Bible Study on Wednesday evenings, commencing by Zoom on 27th April.

As most of you will be aware the Revd Mark Searle moved from All Saints in the spring and he and Meghan now have their new role as Senior Pastors in the Vineyard Church at Trowbridge.

The three churches within the benefice have met regularly and drawn up a Parish Profile to set the procedure in progress for appointing his successor. We are very grateful to Tony Davies our churchwarden for representing us throughout this detailed process and also to Victoria Humphries for her involvement. With guidance from the Vice Chancellor's representative interviews will be taking place shortly and we hope the interregnum will not be too long before we welcome our new Rector.

PAST EVENTS



At the end of April, a very productive morning was held by local volunteers working throughout the churchyard and polishing inside the church. Another will probably be held in the summer.

A joint Langridge and North Stoke Lent Course was well attended by zoom and is continuing as Bible Study on Wednesday evenings with Robin Lewis.

FUTURE EVENTS

On the 25th June Donald and Jane Macintyre are kindly inviting us to go for a Wildflower Walk at Manor Farm, Langridge. This is always such an enjoyable event, and we shall have tea together afterwards.

On 6th August we are delighted that Liz Bavin will be coming to Langridge to lead us through a Quiet Day. We shall gather at the church at 10.30 and stop for lunch and meet together until mid-afternoon.

On 10th September we shall welcome Evelyn Strasburger back to our church for a recital of songs – **Music for a Country Church**, accompanied by pianist Charles Wiffen.

Later in the autumn, hopefully 8th October, we look forward to Bishop Richard Fenwick returning to give us another organ recital. Look on the website for details at the time. As always it is good to check our website nearer the time.

FUTURE PLANS

By the time you read this we will have had our APCM which is held every May. As you are all aware Tony Davies has served as our Churchwarden for the last six years and is stepping down. We are all so grateful to him for all he has contributed to the life of St Mary Magdalene Church.

In particular,, during the difficult times of covid, he has been so innovative and encouraging. The guidance from the Archdeacon has helped while planning our survey and making strategic plans for future. Tony's vigorous commitment during this time of the interregnum, when he has represented our church in preparing the Parish Profile with All Saints and South Stoke, has been so greatly appreciated. We now look forward to having close links within the benefice when our new rector is appointed.

MEMORY CORNER

From Margaret Allen, Treasurer

Margaret was on the PCC for many years before becoming treasurer of first, the Langridge Ladies in the 1960's, and then in the 1970's the Friends – read on

Since our last meeting, when Victoria showed us the Langridge Recipe Book, it made me think about how, why and when the Friends came about and, as I said at the last meeting, I am one of the last original members.

In the early 60's John Mant, a solicitor, and his wife Joan had the Barn that once belonged to Langridge House converted into a house and moved in. They realised that the church was in need of some TLC and they then organised some events to raise money.

However, it soon became evident a committee was needed to organise these events and so a meeting was called and a Committee formed with Joan as Chairman, with I think Vera Griffin as secretary and me as treasurer. We were known as the Langridge Ladies and the first event I have recorded is a supper party in 1966 when we made a profit of £10-10-2d. The Harvest Supper in 1968 made £18-16-0, charging 6/- for adults and 3/- for children.

We went on having Supper Parties at the Barn and Beetle Drives, Coffee Mornings, Whist Drives, Lent Lunches and Jumble Sales giving donations to the Church towards expenses. Then the PCC realised that by the early 70's the church quota had increased considerably because it was based then on how much money was raised by the church. To counteract this it was decided to form the Friends and we would be totally independent and be the fundraisers for the church. A constitution was then drawn up, and by doing this the quota did not drop. Our first Balance sheet was for 15 months to December 1974.

In that time we had Harvest Supper 1973 which raised £56.40d and we celebrate 400 years of the chalice with a Wine and Cheese party raising £28 88d. Many other events took place including B.B.Q's, Strawberry Teas and the young ones organised a New Year's Eve Party and in 5 months we gave £157.50 towards Parish expenses and Church repairs and redecoration £385.

The Recipe Book in 1980 made a profit of \$550. This was thanks to Chris Britton who had come to live at Langridge House and printed them for free.

We went on having Jumble Sales, Lent Lunches, Harvest Suppers, Auction of Promises, Pork Pie Supper Party, Alice in Wonderland Tea, B.B.Q's and a Flower Festival which paid a lot of the church expenses like grasscutting, electric bills and even paying £8361 for roof repairs.

Then in 1991 Peter Pelly and Chris Britton came up with the idea of doing something for another charity. The one chosen was 'Send a Cow' where we promised to raise £1000 for them in one day and if we didn't raise that amount the Friends would make up the balance. It was decided to have a Country Fair at the Bath Racecourse on Lansdown and, like Topsy, it grew and we used Judy's caravan on the day as the bank. All kinds of things went on like setting up cake stalls etc and The Red Devils, a parachute team, dropped in too. We raised £10,723 profit after giving £1000 to Send a Cow.

We don't have so many people at our events now but you might be interested to know the highest number for the Harvest Supper was 168 people. I still have my copy of the Constitution and I have had it copied for you.

I might add that the Race Course owners were extremely generous as they let us use their facilities for free.

Over recent years it has been sad that the numbers supporting the Langridge Friends have diminished. There so many occasions which people remember either on a regular basis or single events. The last 2-3 years have been a good reminder of how we value each others friendship, particularly in small communities.

Some of us feel that it might be a wonderful opportunity to link up together again and have the special experience of sharing ideas and occasions where we can enjoy each others company and learn something new.

If you feel you might like to get together why not chat about this and hopefully an enthusiastic group will emerge within valley community, the congregation and further afield.

**** On the following page you will find a poem written by Gerard Gilroy. Recently he has written some very moving poems relating to Ukraine. Having often visited St Mary Magdalen Church he wanted to learn more Of the history of the church and has sent us this beautiful poem.**

St Mary Magdalene, Langridge

The country lane runs down
The steep side of the valley;
Deep banks on either side guide
Determined pilgrims to the little church.
Four ancient yew-trees guard the gate,
Enfold the departed where they stayed
One night before their final rest.
Tombs are sprinkled about the churchyard,
A place of peace for a thousand years.

One Norman arch circles above the door;
Another frames in geometric shapes
The church's modest chancel.
Above this arch is the church's treasure:
The graceful sculpted lines of a damaged
Madonna and Child from Saxon times.
Defaced in a bout of reforming zeal,
It was buried by faithful parishioners
Proud of their Virgin and Child,
And found in a farm in Victorian times.
Restored to her niche, the Mother
Wraps her powerful sceptred Son in
Sinuous curving folds of stone,

Her loving pity undiminished
By the savage blows that smashed her,
Only increased by the faith of those
Who preserved her beneath the soil.
The heart in hiding was beating still.

Tenderness may be hurt by hammers of hate,
But emerges undaunted like this *Mater Dolorosa*,
Who offers us hope: when cities are in ruins,
And poisoned by death, all shall be well,
And all manner of thing shall be well.
After a time underground, we may say *Rabbouni*,
When we hear the gardener gently call, *Maria*.

Gerard Kilroy

New Bishop of Bath and Wells announced

Downing Street announced on 28 April 2022 that **the Rt Revd Michael Beasley** will be the next Bishop of Bath and Wells. He is currently the Bishop of Hertford, a role which he has held since 2015. Prior to taking a fulltime role with the church, Bishop Michael was an epidemiologist, a background he was called on to use during the pandemic as a member of the Church of England's Covid task force.

Bishop Michael is already familiar with Somerset. His wife Lizzie is from a farming family from Somerset and prior to Bishop Michael being interviewed for the role of Bishop of Bath and Wells, they both undertook a 60 mile walk around the county.

Speaking in advance of today's announcement, Bishop Michael shared his joy in becoming the 80th Bishop of Bath and Wells and said he was looking forward to getting to know the people of Somerset.

He says, "I am delighted to be coming to be the Bishop of Bath and Wells and to joining with everyone in the diocese as together we live and tell the story of Jesus.

"We have strong family connections with Somerset and I'm very much looking forward to working alongside its people, communities and churches.

"We have all been through a challenging few years. The COVID pandemic pushed us all apart. Now is the time to come back together. Our churches have an essential role in helping us rebuild communities and in facing the challenges present to us both internationally and at home.

"Jesus's message is one of peace – a peace I'm looking forward to sharing and pursuing as I join you as your bishop."

Before his ordination as Bishop of Hertford in the Diocese of St Albans, Bishop Michael served as Director of Mission in the Diocese of Oxford. A scientist by background, he was an epidemiologist specialising in infectious diseases of children in low-income countries.

As well as being a member of the Church of England's Covid task force he also worked with UNICEF, the NHS, the Government and leaders of different faiths to launch vaccinaid.org which has raised more than £10 million in support of vaccination for low-income countries.

Commenting on his work on the taskforce he says, "I thought I'd left science behind but God never wastes anything! So in the last few years the skills I gained before have been of use to the Church now."

Bishop Michael

LANGRIDGE SERVICES			
June to August 2022			
Date	Time	Type of Service	Preacher
June 5	10.30	CW MP Whit Sunday & Jubilee	Mr R Lewis
June 12	9.30	CW HC Trinity Sunday	Rev R Hunt
June 19	9.30	BCP MP 1 st after Trinity	Rev D Parr
June 26	9.30	BCP HC 2 nd after Trinity	Rev R Webb
July 3	9.30	BCP MP 3 rd after Trinity	Canon R Clifton
July 10	9.30	CW HC 4 th after Trinity	tbc
July 17	9.30	BCP HC 5 th after Trinity	Rev R Hunt
July 24	9.30	CW MP St Mary Magdalene & 6 th after Trinity	Rev J Harries
July 31	9.30	CW MP 7 th after Trinity	Canon R Clifton
August 7	9.30	BCP MP 8 th after Trinity	Mr C Maggs
August 14	9.30	CW HC 9 th after Trinity	Rev J Harries
August 21	9.30	CW MP 10 th after Trinity	Rev D Parr
August 28	9.30	BCP HC 11 th after Trinity	Rev R Webb

If you have contributions for the next Newsletter September to December 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 August**.

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