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around Bridgnorth

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Aston Eyre

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St Peter's

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St Michael's



FROM ARCHDEACON DEREK

As we begin Lent you might think that there is nothing new to say about this period of the church year. As I was reflecting on what I would write I was reminded that March 2025 also marks the twentieth anniversary return of one of my favourite cultural icons. Doctor Who returned to our television screens on 26th March 2005 and a whole new generation of children and adults were introduced to what has and continues to be a British cultural phenomenon on a par with Sherlock Holmes. Even if you don't like it and science fiction isn't your thing it has even generated entries in the Oxford English Dictionary with Dalek and Tardis now part of our language.

You might be thinking what has Doctor Who and lent have in common and to be fair on the face of it very little! Yet at the heart of Doctor Who is the important idea of 'regeneration' by which the Doctor changes his or her appearance and is completely renewed. The Christian faith also has regeneration at the heart of its message. Lent is an opportunity for each of us to open ourselves up to the power of God to bring spiritual regeneration in our lives. Lent is traditionally a period of self reflection, abstinence and discipline which are not words which create a lot of excitement in our very instant society yet it is these very straightforward spiritual disciplines that lead to spiritual growth and help us to deepen our faith in God. St Paul writing to the early church in Rome challenges us to be renewed and regenerated:

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The New Testament writers recognised that it is only when our inner spiritual life is brought to life that at pattern of behaviour, thoughts and way of living is radically changed to become more like Jesus. Lent allows us the space and time to reflect on how we live and seek God's forgiveness and strength to turn our lives in a different direction. The bible calls this repentance but in effect it means turning our lives in a completely new direction and living God's way rather than our own way. God will never force us or compel us to choose to live according to the rules of the kingdom but instead he stands ready to bring us spiritual regeneration when we turn to him. This is what is meant by John in his gospel when he talks about being born again. This is not some evangelical American term but the words of Jesus to Nicodemus when he enquires about how to live God's way.

“Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

John 3:1-3

As you approach this coming Lent why not give yourself the time to examine your life and faith and allow the Holy Spirit to challenge and change you to be more like Jesus. It is only when we invite God to help us to live according to his values and to help us lay aside the things that hinder our journey with him that we can truly begin to become the people that God has created us to be and to fulfil the potential he has given us. This is true regeneration that is life changing and life affirming and enables us as followers of Jesus to be signposts of the kingdom in our communities. Paul in his letter to Titus sums this up perfectly:

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward us appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ...”

Titus 3:4-6

As we begin our Lentern journey rather than give something up we should instead seek to take something up and ask God to begin afresh the process of regeneration in each of us as we seek to journey together and grow in our faith.

The Venerable Derek Chedzey

Archdeacon of Hereford

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ST MARY'S 200 CLUB**

February draw

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£10 Liz and Ron Smallman 8

£10 Martin Blackburn 131

£10 Stan Oakes 185

ST MARY'S CONNECT

Our next lunch and get together is on **Tuesday 18th March** in The function room at **The Shakespeare Pub at 12.30**

If you would like to join us please contact Catherine Wilson 01746 761786 to book your place, these are limited and will be allocated on a first come first

ST MARY MAGDALENE BRIDGNORTH COFFEE SHOP

St Mary's Coffee Shop Every Saturday—10.00am—12.30pm



Music Director - Steve Cooper
Accompanist - Oliver Clarke

**St Mary's Chamber Choir
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(Choir founded in 2005)

Rehearsals resume on **Saturday 18th January 2025** in preparation for our Easter Concert

on **Saturday 19th April 2025 at 7pm.**

These rehearsals take place at 10.00am - 11.30am in church (St Mary's - East Castle St).

No voice test just come along and join 50 other singers both men, women and students as we begin to prepare music for Easter.

New members are always welcome.

For further details: contact Jane Downing via email
jane.downing60@gmail.com

More details about the choir can be found on our website:

www.stmaryschamberchoir.co.uk





Pancake party

Tuesday 4th of March

12-5pm

at

St Leonards hall church

rectorbridgnorthandmorville

@gmail.com

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two with your favourite topping!

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MAUNDY THURSDAY

Oldbury parish church 17th April at 6.30pm

Come and take part in a retelling of Maundy Thursday with hymns and optional footwashing

‘Belaria and Friends’

**return to St Mary Magdalene in Bridgnorth for another
lunchtime concert on Saturday 15 March at 12.00**



The singing duo, who are joined again by local singing favourite Suzanne Millington, offer an hour’s programme of operatic and classical duets, solos and trios and their pianist and accompanist Catherine Lack will also play some popular solos on St Mary’s magnificent piano.

Belaria was formed in 2019 by John Davidson and Patricia Head. They are both lovers of opera and the classical vocal repertoire and wanted to create more opportunities to present this to local audiences. To date the duo has enjoyed a busy concert programme at venues in Bromsgrove, Worcester (Worcester Cathedral), Ledbury, Malvern, Great Witley, Bourton on the Water, Hagley and, of course Bridgnorth, as well as various other churches in Shropshire.

Entry is free with a retiring collection. We invite people to come along to enjoy a cuppa and a piece of cake accompanied by a gentle music interlude on a Saturday lunchtime.

OLDBURY NEWS

As I write this, it's cold and damp outside, and Spring seems a long way away, but with the beginning of Lent comes the beginning of the seasons turning – as it always does, and the hope of brighter and lighter days.

I also hope that some of you were able to join us on 1st March for the John Moore Quire concert and supper – think hymns and folk music from the late 1700s to mid 1800s – which ranges from spiritual to a little bawdy. We enjoyed their music enough on a visit a few years ago that we asked them back for a repeat performance.

Through the Spring we shall be holding our usual services at 10:30am on the First and Third Sundays of the month, and then our Coffee and Cake mornings when we have a 5th Sunday – when anyone is welcome to drop in for a drink and a chat about whatever's going on in the church and our community. The local dogs often bring their owners along whilst out for a morning walk, and both are welcomed equally.

Roly and Hugh Trevor-Jones are opening their gardens again this season – on the afternoon of Sunday 27th April in aid of the National Gardens Scheme, and on the evening of Wednesday 18th June for the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust. On both occasions they have invited the church to run a tea and cake stall in aid of church funds, which on the evidence of previous years will be well supplied and equally well consumed. The combination of Westwood's gardens and St Nicholas' baking is always a hit – whether it be the tulips in the spring or the summer roses, Victoria sponge or scones.

On a more practical note, we continue to investigate making the building a more practical place for both church and community, with both the electrics and heating on the agenda, and the purchase of new altar cloths in memory of Jean Driver, one of our church who passed away not long ago.

We continue to be grateful for Marjorie Brooks' faithful ministry, and are looking forward to seeing the path that Suzan Williams' leadership takes.

Diana Scutt

Clergy Thoughts

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. (Psalm 42:2)

What does Lent mean to you? Like many of our practices, Lent only gradually emerged as a Christian tradition. The word itself is derived from the old English “lencten” which simply means the spring season during which we keep this observance. We associate it, of course, with the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry, but the Church did not immediately adopt it generally. Emulating Jesus, it began as a period of 40 days of preparation, but this preparation was for new converts. They would mostly be adults and would be trained, “catechised,” and then baptised all together in a group at Easter. So those 40 days were to get the candidates ready for their new life in Christ. They would fast and pray, spend time in meditation, and be instructed in the faith, so that when they came to be baptised, they could take their place as fully equipped members of the Christian community.

It was not until after the Council of Nicea in 325AD that the practice was adopted across the Church, with the emphasis on fasting. And even then there were many regional variations, until Pope Gregory I (590-604) regularised it and ordered that Lent was to begin with an ashing ceremony on a Wednesday 46 days before Easter. Every day was to be a strict fast except that Sundays throughout Lent would continue to be days of celebration – effectively, days off, rounding it down to 40.

And that is the pattern that the Church has maintained more or less unchanged, (with some dissent from Puritans,) to the present, though the severe fast that was observed in the early days, has now often become a token observance, perhaps giving up chocolate or alcohol for the duration, a long way from the emphasis on self-discipline and solidarity with the sufferings of Christ which inspired the first fasts. It is of course, a penitential time for us to reflect on our sins and failings, to repent of them and seek the help of the Spirit to make improvements. But that link of using Lent as preparation for baptism has disappeared for the most part. So, what now is the purpose of Lent for Christians today?

It is still a time of preparation – to prepare ourselves for Easter. And repentance, charity, prayer and fasting all still play a part in that preparation. But they do not exist in a vacuum. They are not in themselves the purpose of Lent; they are means to an end. They are tools to aid and enhance our Christian lives, and first and foremost to

bring us closer to Christ. Personally, I'm not in favour of taking too legalistic an approach to Lent, as we then spend more time thinking about keeping the rules than about seeking Jesus. That is an approach reminiscent of the Pharisees. And it is not a competition to see who can give up the most or be the most holy; Jesus warned us against making a great show of our piety in public. Lent is a time to stimulate that thirst for God that the psalmist speaks of and think about our relationship with him.

Despite, its penitential mood, I think Lent should be an uplifting and positive experience. Forget the checklist and fix your eyes on Jesus; make your act of repentance and then come closer to him through your own private prayer, meditation and Bible reading, and through public worship shared with other Christians. Lent is your invitation from Jesus to get to know him better so that you feel ready to meet him with joy on the glorious morning of his resurrection – and even greater joy on that day when we will experience our own resurrection and share with him the new life, he has won for us. God in Jesus is always near; Lent can bring him nearer still.

Marjorie Brooks

Rain' by Tony Phillips

Give us strength oh Lord, to cope with the cold and the rain,
I know this is England, but it's all such a pain,
last summer was a washout, and winter is the same,
so please give us a break Lord, before we go insane,

The cold and the damp Lord, is making my bones creak,
they say it's due to climate change, but it's the sun that we seek,
my sunglasses are on the shelf, now gathering dust,
and we've all got arthritis Lord, a form of human rust.

Brethren, pray for clearer skies, and that the sun shines again,
the Romans couldn't stand it here, they left because of all the rain,
it's not much to ask for Lord, once in a while,
for the sun to come out, and give us all a smile,
so let us pray for a dry summer, and may the clouds drift away,
from April to October Lord, grant us sunny days.

Quatford News

As I write this missive on 11th February, I feel I have to quote the Revd Marjorie and tell you that: "It's been quite a week at Quatford".

On Friday 7th February we celebrated, with thanksgiving, the life of Andrew Wenlock, son of Anne and David, husband of Lynn and father of two, whose family and friends filled our church to overflowing such was the respect that people had for Andy. In the times ahead may we ask you to hold the family in your prayers.

On Sunday 9th February the service progressed without incident until, half way through the final hymn, the electricity failed. Undeterred, many in the congregation, especially Carol, Pat and Rosemary sang on in full voice in the spirit of 'the show must go on!' Thankfully, Marjorie had her battery powered light source and was able to complete the service. The culprit was (quote): 'a mains circuit cut off that had fused'. Help, however, was at hand and we are grateful to Church members Peter, David and Tom Wenlock and the specialists: Ross of RS Electrics and Keiran of Western Power who came out to investigate and subsequently repair the electrical circuit. We are, thankfully, safe once again and only sorry that we could not have coffee after the service especially as we had three visitors from the parish.

Saturday 8th February was also a busy day as many in the Benefice attended the ReSource Ministry study day held at Astley Abbots Village Hall where lunch proved most enjoyable. Thank you, to all concerned. We were led by the Director of ReSource, the Revd Dr Christopher Landau who, in his gentle manner, made a compelling argument for the concept of 'charismatic renewal'. This is my interpretation of the day which was divided into three sections. The first considered 'dreams', of being filled with the Holy Spirit and of being alive to His purpose; the second considered placing oneself in the 'dream story' and thinking about the Power of Christ and how one might engage in the furtherance of mission in our parish churches; and finally, the third section encouraged us to concentrate on 'Just One Thing' that would enable us, in our parish churches, to move forward in faith and hope so that we might engage with and serve our local community and in so doing bring others into what is a very diverse church.

Dates for your diary:

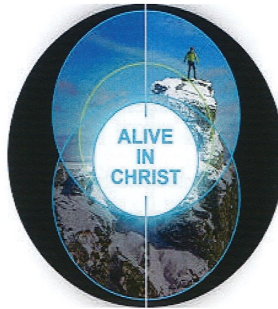
Sunday, 9th March: Holy Communion (1662), Quatford Church at 10.30 am

Sunday, 30th March: Mothering Sunday, hosted by Oldbury Church at 10.30 am

Going Forward: **Saturday, 28th June:** Quatford Summer Concert at 7pm with entertainment by the Bridgnorth Community Choir. More details nearer the time.

Finally, we are sorry to report that the platform lift continues to be out-of-order.

Gillian Waugh Pead.



Bridgnorth and Morville Team

Lent course

St James's hall church

Tuesday 11th, 18th, 25th of March

1st & 8th of April

7.30-9.30pm

Thursday 13th, 20th, 27th of March 3rd, 17th April 2-4.30pm

Come along and take part in our Lent course for 2025

We'll explore what it means to know who we are in Christ and how we can confidently share our faith with those around us.

Contact Suzan for more details rectorbridgnorthandmorville@gmail.com

01746 599528

Compline in Lent around the Team

Wednesdays all at 6.30pm

5th March – Astley Abbots,

12th March – Monkhopton,

19th March – Morville,

26th March – Quatford,

2nd April – Tasley,

9th April – Acton Round,

16th April Tenebrae service at St Mary's

Tasley News

As we have only had one service this month, there is little to report. Fortunately we have two planned for March. One on the first and one on the third Sundays.

We plod ahead with our plans for a composting toilet. This seems to be our best option and we are most grateful to our neighbour Kelvin, for all his planning and research into this.

The Snowdrops in the old churchyard are wonderful this year and are certainly worth a visit. There is even one or two brave primroses peeping through.

The coffee morning on the 3rd March will include a talk by the Fire Service on "Safety in the Home". The coffee morning will start at 10-30 with the talk starting at 11am.

The 100Club will start again for 2025 in March and all subscription are now due.

Events for March

Sat – 15th March "Flicks in the Sticks" in the village hall at 7pm. This months film is, "The Upside" and proceeds will be for the Food bank.

Bob

St Calixtus Astley Abbotts

As I write this it is 2° and sleet, but I am reliably informed it will be 15° by the weekend, so spring will arrive in a rush, with its Holy Communion on 2nd March 9.00am, and Lent opening with an Ash Wednesday service at 6.30pm on the 5th March. We will also hold a Lent devotion on Sunday 23rd March at 4.00pm, there will be no morning service that day. Our Mothering Sunday service on 30th March will start at 9.30, come along Mums and receive your posies!! So something for everyone.

We welcomed our new vicar Suzan, who gave us Holy Communion on January 19th, and again on 2nd February, it is wonderful to begin getting back to "normal".

Cafe church was a great success, thank you to Steve Alston, pioneer minister who came from Craven Arms to help us "take a fresh look at love" while enjoying a delicious breakfast and chat.

A big thank you to Michael and Clare for hosting their ever popular snowdrop walk, and to Juanita and Rosemary for helping with catering, it was a great success, the snowdrops were at their best, and the weather held!

We said goodbye to Ron Painter 96, a beautiful service taken by Simon Boxall, Paul singing "You raise me up" was so moving.

Rosemary and Graham Patey are holding a 5 session Bible study course following the "Be Still" book by Brian Heasley, starting on March 11th at their house, please ring if you are interested in joining 01746769125.

Idonea



World Day of Prayer Service



**Friday 7th March 2:30pm
at Cartway Methodist Church**

The World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement, led by Christian women of many traditions, who call us together annually for a shared day of pray on the first Friday in March. The wave of prayer starts early in the morning on the international dateline in Samoa and as the earth rotates, continues through Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas finally completing its circle of the earth to end in American Samoa.

Each year, women of a different country lead the call to prayer and select a theme for the worship based on their experience and concerns. This year it's the turn of the Cook Islands located in the South Pacific, some 1800 miles to the north-east of New Zealand. The chosen theme is "I made you wonderful", inspired by Psalm 139 and reflecting their colourful Maori heritage and deep connection with nature.

In Bridgnorth, the service is a lovely ecumenical event, each year hosted by one of the town's churches and rotating around Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, People's Hall and Anglican venues in turn. Although the movement was started by women and the day was previously known as the 'Women's World Day of Prayer', the change of name to 'World Day of Prayer' better reflects the fact that everyone is very welcome to come along to the service.

Sheila Royle



'Music for Easter'

**St Mary's Chamber Choir
will be performing
'Faure Requiem'
& music for Holy Week**

At

**St Mary Magdalene Church
East Castle Street, Bridgnorth
Easter Saturday 19th April 2025
7.00pm**

Music Director : Steve Cooper

Accompanist : Oliver Clarke

Tickets £10 on the door

Includes programme and refreshments

Wednesday 16th of April
St Mary Magdalene
Parish church 6.30pm

T E N E B R A E

A SERVICE OF SHADOWS

A service of reflection and contemplation
as we journey through Holy Week

Lenten Thoughts

Though tree trunks all around,
of thick or slender girth, still keep
A numb and sapless sleep profound,
A tooth of crocus dares to peep
from leaden earth,
and blackbird tries a tune
of hopeful worth.
But churches 'ash' today
with solemn and repentant chant,
and noon-time shadows slant
then die away to show
that cold to come is pain,
returning in its fitful throes -
defying life to come again;
where agony has far to go,
till death is our defeated foe.

Roger Taylor

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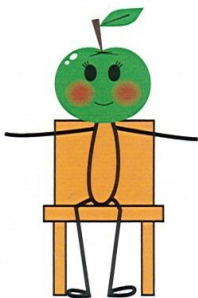


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St Leonard's Primary School 762781
St Mary's Primary School 763455
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Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
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Shropshire Fire and Rescue
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Bridgnorth and Morville Parishes Team Ministry

Team Office: St Leonard's Hall Church,
Racecourse Drive,
Tasley,
Bridgnorth
WV16 4NR
Tel: 01746 767174
Team Administrator: Mrs Avril Bridges

Open to personal callers:
Mon, Tues, Wed and Thurs
8.30am - 11.30am

Email :
bridgnorthteamministry@yahoo.co.uk
Website :
www.bridgnorthteamministry.org.uk

Priest in charge

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rectorbridgnorthandmorville@gmail.com

Anna Chaplain/Reader

Mrs Jane Peeler 767043
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Mrs Jane Parr...07814908917
Secretary Miss Catherine Wilson...761786
Treasurer Mrs Nicky Cooper762487
Vergers Mr Roger Taylor...767345
Deputy Organist
Mr Oliver Clarke...07545756869

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Vacant
Vergers Mr Bob Curtis...766126
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Mr Ed Pugh....01746 789685
Treasurer Mrs Tamsin Preece..01746 765538

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elizabethfisher29@icloud.com

St Leonards Hall Church

Booking Secretary Rachel Connelly...767660

Tasley Village Hall

Booking Secretary Fiona Berriman... 765512

Astley Abbotts Village Hall

Booking Secretary Charles Morris.....762029

Deadline for Cross+Link articles for

April edition

Wednesday 19th March

by 1.00pm

If you would like to contribute to the magazine,
please send to Avril at the Office on
bridgnorthteamministry@yahoo.co.uk.
If you would like to advertise please also
contact Avril on the above details

MARCH`25

<i>HC = Holy Communion</i> <i>MP = Morning Prayer</i>	2nd March Sun next before Lent	9th March Lent 1	16th March Lent 2	23rd March Lent 3
St Mary Magdalene Bridgnorth	10.30 HC	10.30 HC	10.30 MP	10.30 FS AND BAPTISM
St Mary Magdalene Quatford		10.30 HC		10.30 HC
St Calixtus Astley Abbotts	9.00 HC	9.30 FS	9.00 MP	9.00 MP
St Nicholas Oldbury	10.30 FS/ BAPTISM		10.30 HC	
St Peter and St Paul Tasley	10.30 HC		10.30 HC	
St Leonard's Hall Church	10.30 FS		10.30 FC	
St Gregory the Gt. Morville	11.15 MP	11.15 MP	11.15 MP	11.15 FS AND BAPTISM
Aston Eyre		10.00 MP		10.00 HC
St Mary the Virgin Acton Round		10.00 HC		
Monkhopton	10.00 MP			