

Linking Parish Churches
around Bridgnorth

CROSS+LINK



St Mary Magdalene	SS Peter + Paul	St Calixtus	St Nicholas	St Mary Magdalene	St Leonards Hall
Bridgnorth	Tasley	Astley Abbotts	Oldbury	Quatford	Bridgnorth



Bridgnorth	Acton Round	Aston Eyre	Monkhopton	Morville	Upton Cressett
St James' Hall	St Mary the Virgin	Aston Eyre	St Peter's	St Gregory the Great	St Michael's



FROM AD FIONA

Dear friends

As I write this I'm about to embark on a four-week period of interim study leave to complete (God willing) my PhD thesis. By the time you read this, we'll know whether or not I have succeeded!

The work focuses on one of the seven deadly sins, not necessarily the most popular of topics when the idea that human beings might be sinful creatures in need of a Saviour has rather fallen out of favour in our society. Even more obscurely, the sin I'm writing about is the one most people have never heard of: *acedia*. It's most often translated 'sloth' which is usually associated with laziness, and laziness isn't normally seen as much of a sin. An annoying characteristic, maybe, but not a sin.

But as I've studied this topic over many years (too many years; I've often felt like my own case study in *acedia*) I've come to realise it's far more complex than that, and may even be the prevailing sin of our time, all the more insidious because we've largely forgotten it even exists.

Acedia, according to the early theologians I've been reading and engaging with, is a toxic combination that occurs when desire and anger become disordered. It makes us either withdraw into inactivity or hide in restless over-activity, in an effort to avoid engaging with God, or with fellow human beings, or with the tasks God has given us to do. That's why I'm suggesting this is the hidden but very real sin of our time.

One theologian calls it the container of all other vices because it triggers all of the other deadly sins. So far from sloth being almost trivial it appears it's potentially lethal for our spiritual lives, if left unchallenged.

But, thanks be to God, it needn't be. Like any other sin with which we battle *acedia* has been overcome by Christ on the cross. In our individual lives and struggles against sin we can know God's grace, forgiveness, and strengthening in the daily battle against the sins we know all too well and this sin of *acedia*, whose name we may never have heard of but now may recognise.

Recognising it is the first step in overcoming it. I love the deeply realistic means of grace which our ancient predecessors in faith suggested as prescriptions for those suffering from acedia. They were written more than 1500 years ago, but could have been written yesterday:

First, pray short prayers, not long ones. The mind can wander and fall prey to acedia when praying long prayers.

Second, set yourself a short task, and don't get up or do anything else until you've completed it.

Third, physical work. That can snap us out of an acedia attack in the mind.

Fourth, try a warm bath (yes, really!). That one's a bit less practical if acedia strikes while you're at work.

Fifth, the one that usually makes people sigh in startled relief: tears. Because tears break down the shell that acedia has built around the soul, and bring healing.

I could write a lot more on the subject, which is just as well as I have 80,000 words plus footnotes to hand in, so for now I must bid you farewell for a few weeks as I stop procrastinating and get on with the work of writing about acedia and how, by the grace of God, we may overcome it.

AD Fiona

BRASS CLEANERS WANTED—ST MARY MAGDALENE BRIDGNORTH—

If you feel you could help by joining our brass cleaning rota (cleaning would be approx. once every 6 weeks) at St Mary's please contact Helen Howell on 01746 763066.

ST MARY'S CONNECT

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

If you would like to join us please contact Helen Howell on 01746 763066 to book your place, these are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

ST MARY MAGDALENE BRIDGNORTH COFFEE SHOP

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

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Little Stars play group at St. Mary's church is looking for more volunteers to help out

Do you enjoy working with small children and their carers? Would you like to be part of a caring friendly team ? If so, we'd love to hear from you. No experience necessary.

Little Stars is the play group with a Christian ethos run at St. Mary's church on Thursday mornings. It is open for any child or baby under 5 with their responsible adult within the Bridgnorth benefice. It is a lively popular group where children and adults alike make friends and enjoy the activities.

We offer play, toys, crafts, songs and stories along with refreshments. Our volunteers help with all these activities, and facilitate playing together and friendship. The group runs from 10 am -11.30 am on Thursdays with volunteers arriving at 9.30 am.

If you are interested please contact our church office on

Tel 01746 767174

or email bridgnorthteamministry@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you

Please note at a DBS police check will need to be completed

CLERGY THOUGHTS FROM MARJORIE

*Him we proclaim, warning everyone and
teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we
may present everyone mature in Christ.*

(Colossians 1:28)

I preach a sermon almost every Sunday as well as at various occasional services. And I preach, not exclusively, but nearly always from one of the passages indicated by the Church of England lectionary. The Gospel is usually the more user-friendly but I think it is important to strike a balance and be prepared to tackle some of the more challenging readings at times, so we do not become too cosy.

But this begs the question - why preach at all? That great actor, Sir Ralph Richardson once said of his own profession: "Acting is the art of keeping a large group of people from coughing." And you could apply that to preaching. If you get through the sermon without a lot of shuffling and throat-clearing, - and with the congregation still awake - you are probably not doing too badly. Preaching is of course a traditional part of a church service; sermons have always been preached in church and there is a slot designated for it in the liturgy. And when I began my ministerial training, initially as a reader, I was instructed that preaching was the central feature of my ministry, though the brief became wider after my ordination.

But none of that explains the reason for and the purpose of preaching.

The reason for doing it, first and foremost I think, is that we are following Christ's example, doing what Jesus did. He went round the countryside teaching; day after day, he was preaching sermons. In fact, one of the most influential parts of all Christian teaching is called The Sermon on the Mount. And I don't think there would be any coughing in the pews if every sermon had that quality.

Then I am aiming to share thoughts and knowledge which I have gleaned from my own study of the scriptures but which I hope are inspired by the Holy Spirit. That is important because it means that though the words are mine the underlying meaning comes from God and I am acting as a channel to convey what he wants you to know; continuing, **in a very small way**, a long prophetic tradition. Teaching the hearers more about God and what he is like.

But the difference between teaching and preaching is that teaching is about imparting knowledge while preaching is about encouraging life-change. So, I believe a sermon should be challenging – but not daunting. It should not discourage by setting unrealistic goals, but should spur the hearer to aspire to something better; greater service, a more fruitful or a more prayerful life. In other words to encourage the congregation to become the people God wants them to be; that we may all become mature Christians who continue to grow in the faith throughout our lives. And that maturity should lead, too, to a social awareness and an understanding of the responsibility we carry, to further the kingdom and care for all of creation.

But above all, preaching should be Christ centred. No sermon is worth listening to unless it has Christ at its heart, explicitly or implicitly. Not just preaching *about* Christ but preaching Christ; making him real and vital to the hearer. We are here to “preach Christ crucified.” (1 Corinthians 1:23) That was the focus of Paul’s missions and should be the focus of all Christian preaching – and of all our lives.

Marjorie Brooks

RIDE+STRIDE – 14 Sept 2024

Ride+Stride is a chance for YOU to raise money for your Church.

Anyone can join in - collect **sponsors**, then plan your own route - walk, bike, **or car** - visit some churches - enjoy the day.

The **sponsorship money is split 50/50 between your local Church** and the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust (SHCT), which uses it to award grants for repairs and improvements to our Churches and Chapels.

So 100% goes to our Churches. This is definitely a ‘**Good Thing**’.

‘Ride+Stride’ is a National event by the National Churches Trust and we, at SHCT, are pleased to support it. The basic idea is twofold:

- (1) Churches try to be open for visitors on Saturday 14 Sept from about 10 to 6, ideally with light refreshments (biscuits. squash; cake maybe).
- (2) Anyone can visit as few or as many churches as you wish.

Go anywhere ... on foot, by bike, **or by car**, using our Sponsorship Form to collect sponsorship for your church and for the Trust

R+S is **NOT** an event where church visits are centrally organised. The Trust does **not** have a 'central team' that plans any walking, cycling, or car rides.

NO ... It's **something that Churches do for themselves**.

September may seem like a long way away, but time flies. You can get a **Sponsorship Form** from our website **www.shropshirehct.org.uk**

Or contact me and I will get one to you. You can still go and visit other churches, even if your own church is closed (builders, lack of staff, etc).

The next 'R+S Day' is Saturday 14th Sept. **But** if you can't manage that date **then you can go on on any other day** – which is what a lot of people do.

It is important to maintain or increase the visiting aspect otherwise the event will cease. The county raised £37,082 last year, so we, the Trust, are encouraging it to continue - even in parts of the county where it has fallen 'off the radar' and, at present, there are few visitors to the open churches.

This event has much more potential ... For example, Dorset raised £98,000. This is 260% more than us, and it has a similar population to Shropshire. Well, actually 30% more, but raising so much for their churches is amazing.

Thank you to everyone who helped in previous years. We (you) raised a record amount last year. Congratulations. We are progressing well.

I hope you can participate this year. **Help preserve our Churches in good repair; and help to keep them open for the future.**

David Hardham (Trustee – and County Organiser for Ride+Stride)

dhardham@yahoo.co.uk 01588 650362.

Full details on SHCT website: www.shropshirehct.org.uk

ASCENDED OR ENDED?

I find it a great sadness that over the last decade or so The Feast of the Ascension has seemingly dwindled away from being a day of Christian obligation to merely a note on a diary or calendar page, if even that.

It seems more acute to me, because, when I lived in London, our local parish church's Patronal Festival fell on Ascension Day and guaranteed an almost full house. The poem on page 10 'Rain on Ascension Day' was inspired not just by the consummative event of Jesus's re-unification with his Father in Heaven, but the beautiful freshness of that morning when the month of May had been marked by above temperatures and a few weeks of drought: you would indeed have needed to have searched the skies for a cloud during that month; but there we were on Ascension Day with refreshing rain and billowing clouds to spare.

Roger

ASTLEY ABBOTTS NEWS

Hello everyone from St Calixtus, where the recent spell of dry, warm weather has allowed farmers to get onto the fields at last. Unfortunately some crops didn't survive well & have had to be sprayed off but this weather is perfect for the grass for the new lambs so we do have a lot to be thankful for.

Speaking of thanks, ours go to Idonea, for her generosity in opening her garden to raise money for our church funds, we are so grateful & hope that everyone there enjoyed the garden & the legendary St Calixtus cakes!!

Our most recent Café Church entitled 'Take a fresh look atTrust' was held at Astley Abbott's Village hall on the 12th May. Canev Clayton from St Mary's, Highley came along to help us look at the passage from Matthew's gospel, where Jesus walks on water. People enjoyed eating together, having fellowship and hearing about Peter's attempt to walk on water and Canev's precarious mode of transport on her recent visit to Uganda.

The next Café Church will be held on July 14th, please do come along, everyone who has done so has told us that Cafe Church is inspiring to them, and most enjoyable.

Our current Bible Study is coming to a close, we plan a new one soon, so watch this space!

Every month we meet in church to pray for our local community & those further afield, our June date is Monday 17th June at 9am, please come along to pray with us informally for a short while, after which we enjoy good coffee & pastries, thank you Judy for your faithful provision of these!

On Sunday 2nd June, Stanley Hall Gardens are open from 2pm-5pm, we are providing refreshments in aid of church funds, do come along, the gardens are very beautiful & we are working hard on the cakes. Many thanks to Clare & Michael Thompson for their generous support of our church community.

The church grounds are looking very beautiful, the meadow area is growing well, with lots of wildflowers starting to appear, also under the Yew by the porch there are some unusual wildflowers we haven't seen before, please come to have a look at them, they really are lovely.

We hope that June is a good month for you all, and that we see you at one of our events or one or two of our regular Sunday services, which are being gloriously planned & led by our team who inspire us so much. A big thank you to everyone who works so hard.

Love to you all from St Calixtus

Idonea & Helen

Rain on Ascension Day

That the church sang midweek
I scarcely heard,
Or thought it a 'Saint's Day'.
More on my mind was that it was
The third week without rain
Of a hot May.
That rain came overnight
I woke to find:
White stars of daisies sprung,
And opened like eyes of the blind.
As if heaven where the sun had burned
Was not too proud,
As something it returned
For what it took from earth
On a white cloud.

Roger Taylor

NEWS FROM ST MARY'S

It has been a while since I have written anything in the magazine mainly because others have been making such a good job of keeping everyone up to date with what was going on.

However two matters have prompted me to write something this month. In actual fact they should have been in last month's Cross Link but I am sorry to say I am so out of practise in writing for Cross Link I missed the deadline.

The first matter I wanted to mention was just to thank everyone who was involved in the organisation of the memorial Service for the Rev. Preb. Andy Roberts. The service was truly uplifting and a moving tribute to our dear friend Andy. Both Liz and the Rev. Keith Lanyon Jones gave moving but very different reflections on Andy's life and it was good to see the Church so full and hear it resounding again with some very familiar hymns.

The fact that so many members of the congregation who are now no longer able to get to church on a regular basis and former members of the congregation who have moved away came back to pay their respects served as a reminder as to just how special Andy was to the congregations of our team and how much both he and Liz gave to us all. We all have happy memories of Andy and Liz's time with us and it was good to share some of these with each other and with the Roberts family over a cup of tea after the service.

The second matter I wanted to mention was the chamber choirs concert on Good Friday. The Chamber Choir gave a very polished performance of choral works suitable for Holy Week and in particular Good Friday on Good Friday. The Choir and John Turnock their musical Director made the performance look effortless but I am sure a lot of hard work goes in to these performances so I just wanted to say thank you for all the hard work it is much appreciated and St. Mary's would be much the poorer without the Chamber Choir.

Talking of concerts you may have noticed that thanks to the efforts of David Oxtoby our Church Warden our church is becoming a popular

concert venue hosting a wide variety of evening and lunch time concerts.

St. Mary's Saturday morning coffee continues to flourish with a growing band of regulars.

Finally this month saw us hold both our Vestry Meeting and A.G.M. David Oxtoby and Jane Parr both agreed to stand again as Church Wardens and were duly elected . Mrs Jane Downing was elected to the P.C.C.

Catherine Wilson.

TASLEY NEWS

Yet another month has almost passed us by. How lovely it has been to see the sunshine.

Our APCM/PCC was held on the 7th May.

We wait with bated breath to hear if we have a new Priest in Charge!

Did anyone manage to get a glimpse of the "Northern Lights"? I'm pleased to say I did!

Our thanks to Clive for leading our Pentecost Service and to Stephen and the Choir for joining us. It was lovely to hear them sing two Anthems, Spirit of God by Gounod and If ye love me by Tallis.

Another Bank Holiday weekend and a Carnival to look forward to. We wish everyone taking part a successful event and hope that the weather is kind to them.

Our coffee mornings continue on the 1st Monday of the month and we look forward to seeing you there.

100 Club Winner for April

1 – 22 Sue baker

2 – 32 Julia Davies

3- 71 Sue McFarlane

100 Club Winners for May

1 – 38 Clare Coruess- Parr

2 – 85 Gwynn Davies

3 – 73 Mal Holland

Future Events

Sat 8th June – Barries Quiz and Wine & Cheese evening in the village hall at 7pm £10

Sunday 23rd June –Puddings Afternoon at Manderley House at 2-30 pm £10

Margaret

QUATFORD NEWS

Just a reminder that our BCP (1662) Holy Communion Service will take place on Sunday 9th June at 10.30 am when, as always, attendees to this service will be most welcome.

A further reminder is to keep the date of Saturday 29th June free for our Summer Concert as we'll be celebrating songs from the shows performed by the Bridgnorth Show Choir. The concert starts at 7 pm and tickets cost £10 (including delicious desserts) that can be obtained either from Foxall's on the High Street, Quatford choir members or on the door (cash please). Proceeds will be shared between church funds and choir charities so do come if you can as it's bound to be an enjoyable evening. (Please see poster on page 14)

We are also expecting a visit from God's Acre this month but if May is anything to go by the weather has been decidedly unfavourable at times with either pouring rain or sunshine at 22 degrees, neither of which are conducive to labouring in a churchyard or a garden – so it's fingers crossed for good weather and a visit from the volunteers.

Gillian Waugh Pead.



St Mary Magdalene Quatford

SUMMER CONCERT

With

THE BRIDGNORTH SHOW CHOIR

An entertaining musical evening

SATURDAY 29th June 2024

At 7pm

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<div><div>Bridgnorth and Morville Parishes Team Ministry</div><div>Team Office: St Leonard’s Hall Church, Racecourse Drive, Tasley, Bridgnorth WV16 4NR Tel: 01746 767174 Team Administrator: Mrs Avril Bridges</div></div>	
<div><div>Open to personal callers: Mon, Tues, Wed and Thurs 8.30am - 11.30am</div><div>Email : bridgnorthteamministry@yahoo.co.uk Website : www.bridgnorthteamministry.org.uk</div></div>	
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**St Mary Magdalene, Bridgnorth
Churchwardens**

Mr David Oxtoby...766053

Mrs Jane Parr...07814908917

Secretary Miss Catherine Wilson...761786

Treasurer Mrs Nicky Cooper762487

Vergers Mr Roger Taylor...767345

Organists Dr John Turnock...716282

Mr Oliver Clarke...07545756869

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Churchwardens**

Mrs Liz Fisher ... 764059

Treasurer Mr Quentin Leiper...764559

Organist Mrs Carol Wall...764365

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Mrs Idonea Pickering...763065

Mrs Helen Holding....07813 584469

Secretary Mrs Juanita Gennard...768674

Treasurer Mr Michael Payne....07790 610441

Organist Mr Stephen Lomas...768648

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Janet Brick....714344

Tim Morris....789271

Secretary Helen Smith01952 883599

Treasurer Mrs Kathy Renshaw...789271

**Aston Eyre
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Mr Dafydd Jenkins....07703 457839

Treasurer Mrs Shelley Caine...714362

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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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Booking Secretary Mrs Liz Fisher...764059

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

**July'24 and August '24
(double issue)**

Wednesday 19th June 2024

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

June '24

<i>HC = Holy Communion</i> <i>MP = Morning Prayer</i>	1st Sun of Trinity 2nd June	2nd Sun of Trinity 9th June	3rd Sun of Trinity 16th June	4th Sun of Trinity 23rd June	5th Sun of Trinity 30th June
St Mary Magdalene Bridgnorth	10.30 HC	10.30 MP	10.30 MP	10.30 FS/ Baptism	10.30 HC
St Mary Magdalene Quatford		10.30 HC		10.30 MP	
St Calixtus Astley Abbotts	9.00 HC	9.30 FS	9.00 MP	9.00 Life and Soul	9.00 Service of the Word
St Nicholas Oldbury	10.30 HC		10.30 MP		10.30 Coffee and Chat
St Peter and St Paul Tasley	10.30 HC	10.30 FS	10.30 HC	10.30 Life and Soul	16.00 Patronal Evensong
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 HC	
Aston Eyre		10.00 MP		10.00 HC	
St Mary the Virgin Acton Round		10.00 HC			
Monkhoppton	10.00 HC by ext.				