

Old Malden News



The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist, Malden

March 2022

50p

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Old Malden News

**The Parish Magazine of
St John the Baptist Parish Church Malden**
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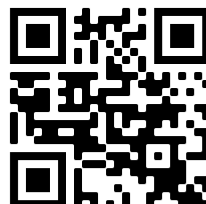
Details from the Bookings Secretary – Pat Sutton
Tel: 020 8942 8321

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Parish Office:	administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk	

To receive the Parish Mailing please scan the
QR code with your smart phone camera



Services for March



St John's is OPEN

St John's has now re-opened for worship so please see the Parish Mailing for details. Live Streaming of services will continue so you will be able to see services live via our YouTube Channel.

Sunday 8am - Said Eucharist

Sunday 9.45am - Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 11am — said Eucharist

The midday Eucharist on Wednesdays has been moved to 11am to cater for the Mothers' Union which on the 1st Wednesday of the month will have a coffee morning at 10am followed by the Eucharist at 11am .

Please make sure you are signed up to our mailing list to get up to date information regarding the services.

<http://eepurl.com/gNz4Tf> or scan the QR Code

Vicar's Letter

The blustery days of mid-February signalled the turning of the seasons as winter's grip recedes and the days grow longer. The garden is full of snowdrops, crocuses, and the tall slender stalks of daffodils at the ready for St. David's Day as the calendar turns a page and March begins. The sunshine lifts our hearts as we look to better days and the freedom the warmer weather brings. All of us are likely to look forward to the season ahead as we emerge from winter. The Church, too, emerges from the strictures imposed by the pandemic as we look forward to regrouping and returning to our Church in number. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 2nd March, as we walk with Christ along the way to that last confrontation at Jerusalem and the triumph of the Cross. Lent is a time, not so much one of giving up and trying to be good, as it is an opportunity to re-evaluate our lives and re-orient them to be more Christ-like. Giving up booze or chocolate only gets us so far, but an honest self-evaluation of ourselves can enable far more spiritual growth and challenge. Lent should always be about us becoming more who we are called by God to be, a sort of before and after from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. That may sound like a very tall order, but we aim to provide both resources and opportunities at St. John's to enrich all of our Lenten journeys.

There will be two services on Ash Wednesday, one at 11:00am and another at 8:00pm so that everyone has the chance to receive the ashes of repentance and kick off Lent in the normal way. How we have missed the "normal" way of doing things! Thankfully we are coming through the pandemic into a safer space, largely thanks to everyone's self-sacrificial behaviour and the vaccine programme. I can't emphasise enough how glad I am to live in the UK as opposed to the US through Covid. We may not be quite out of the woods entirely. But it is time to live again and rediscover the things and the people we have missed.

We will also be holding a weekly Lent group meeting mid-week. We have chosen Paula Gooder's book, *Women of Holy Week*, the story of Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension through the eyes of nine women who were there. Paula is a very accessible theologian and her books are always useful and engaging. We hope to meet in person with a Zoom facility for those unable to be with us on the day. The Julian Group for reflective prayer continues to meet at 8:00pm in Church for half an hour. Lent dates are the 14th March and the 11th April. This is a lovely way to make time for personal and shared prayer in a supportive, welcoming environment. Prayer resources will be available to use at home and there will be opportunities to worship quietly in Church through Lent. Saturdays will start with

Morning Prayer and then the Church will be open until noon throughout Lent. Anyone still willing to help with refreshments from 10:00am- 12:00pm please remind me and we'll get a little rota together. As the weather improves we can expect more visitors wishing to get a look at our lovely Church inside, and I will be available as a sort of "Vicar's surgery" for anyone wanting to book christenings etc.

These past two years have been a very difficult time for so many people. The fear and uncertainty have affected us all and we haven't always been able to be the kind of people we'd like to be. Relationships and family life have been impacted, daily life has been fractious to times and you may feel the need to get things off your chest and start afresh. Lent is traditionally a time of confession and while we can do the more formal, traditional approach, we can just as easily sit down with you over a cup of tea and listen. God is good and Milly and I will happily make ourselves available for anyone who feels the need to talk and be reminded of God's forgiveness. It goes without saying we hold all things in confidence. Let this Lent be a time of renewal and healing!

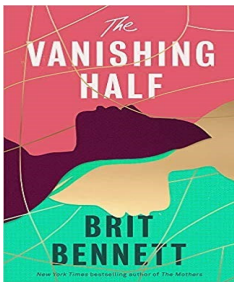
Finally, I'd like to highlight that the Finance Team have done a fantastic job with the Red Envelope Appeal and that we have several brand new donors, as well as a large majority of people whose circumstances have enabled them to either hold their level of stewardship giving or increase it. Thank you very much! We are getting there and may yet be able to pay for full-time stipendary ministry here at St. John's. I would also like to announce that Jane Bransgrove has kindly accepted my request that she become our permanent Stewardship representative. She and Richard Burkett will continue to oversee our Stewardship Appeal and keep us informed of developments. I would also like to encourage anyone who would like to join the PCC at our Annual Meeting at the end of April. We have three vacancies and are down on membership due to the pandemic, so if you'd like to be part of the direct planning and implementing the future direction of St. John's do let me or one of the Churchwarden's know.

With every blessing for Lent,

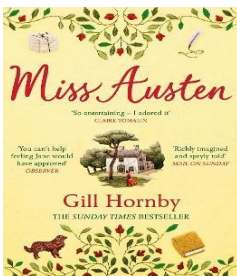
Michael.



St John's Reading Group March 2022



Our choice for February was '**The Vanishing Half**' by Brit Bennett – a book which was Shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction 2021. Identical twins, Stella and Desireé grow up in a small black Southern community but they run away together when they reach the age of sixteen. However, they soon go their different ways: Stella marries a rich white husband and tries desperately to put her background behind her. Desireé returns home to her mother with her daughter after leaving her abusive husband. The story traces the lives of the twin's daughters too and the effect that their search for their own identities has on them. The novel also explores the complex issues around race, gender and relationships. An interesting read with an average score of 7/10.

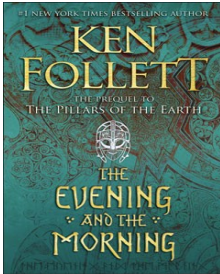


The choice for the March meeting is **Miss Austen** by Gill Hornby. A very different book. Widely acclaimed, this book, set in 1840, follows Jane's sister Cassandra in her attempt to preserve her sister's

reputation. Cassandra goes in search of Jane's (reimagined) lost letters and Ms Hornby tells her story with great empathy and wit, establishing Cassandra as an 'Austen heroine'.

As a work of imagination, it is very believable and a joy to read.

It has now prompted me to read Claire Tomalin's book on Jane Austen and Paula Byrne's 'The Real Jane Austen'.



For those fast readers amongst us, the next choice will present no problem. It is **The Evening and the Morning** by Ken Follett. This is a prequel to the brilliant must-read novel Pillars of the Earth (1989) which is about the building of a cathedral in the fictional town of Kingsbridge and set in the 12th century. The Evening and the Morning is set in 997CE at the end of the Dark Ages with England facing attacks from the Welsh in the west and the Vikings in the east. Chaos ensues. It is quite a long novel with 912 pages in the paperback edition. Ken Follett does not write short novels! Looking forward to starting it.

Our March meeting will be on Thursday 3rd March at 8.00pm in the Church Coffee Lounge. Happy Reading!

Marilyn



CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT THIS FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

Monday 22nd Feb to 6th Mar

What are we doing at St Johns?

On 6th March when we have our full Traidcraft Stall we will explore: Traidcraft's ranges of fair-trade food, drinks, eco-home essentials together with homemade biscuits and cakes using fair-trade ingredients.

Choosing to buy fair trade, ethical food and drink is everyday activism, and is the simplest way to change the world. Look out for the logo! Through fair trade, farmers and growers can earn enough to feed their families, send their children to school, provide a future for their local community and look into solutions to the problems they face due to climate change.

This year, the focus of Fairtrade Fortnight is climate change, and the growing problems this poses to farmers and workers within the Fairtrade community. The two-week period will highlight the facts; climate change is a huge challenge for farmers and workers in countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Honduras, yet these are the countries who have contributed least to the causes of climate change. Droughts, crop disease, floods, heatwaves and shrinking harvests are among the challenges they face. Climate change was one of the biggest obstacles this generation is facing. It is with more money

would they feel equipped to meet their everyday needs and deal with the devastating challenges climate change brings.

Looking to get involved in Fairtrade Fortnight? The Fairtrade Foundation are hosting a free virtual festival over on their website, so why not take a look?

Thank you for all the support you give to the Traidcraft Stall. For another 2 years we've been given the status of a Fair Trade Church. This is because wherever possible we are using Fair-trade goods in our tea, coffee, biscuits, sugar, hand wash, washing up liquid, kitchen rolls, toilet paper. Any person or organisation is welcome to use items in the kitchen. A donation is welcome!

You continue to send financial support to 2 children through the stall to Action Aid. Junior in Zambia and Mara in Afghanistan. Please continue to pray for them.

Anne Beales

Revision of the Electoral Roll 2022

A formal notice of revision of the Electoral Roll will be placed in the Church website on Sunday 20th February 2022. Preparation of the revised Roll will commence on 6th March 2022 and be completed by 26th March 2022..Those already on the Electoral Roll need do nothing.

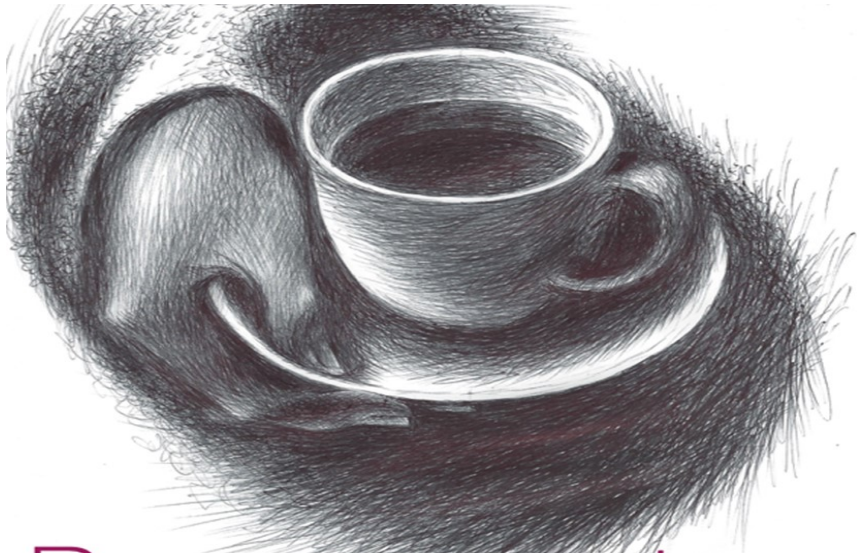
Those wishing to be placed on it should download an application form from the website or pick up one from the church's porch at the appropriate time..

S. Clark – Electoral Roll Officer 0208 337 2392



St John's Knitting & Crochet Group will meet on Thursday 31st March from 2.00pm in the Church Coffee Lounge. Would you like to brush up on your knitting skills – or learn to crochet? New members and beginners always welcome. Tea, cake and biscuits together with a friendly ambience. Do join us!

Marilyn



Bereavement Café

Thank you to everyone who supported the Bereavement Cafe through the Co-op community Charity scheme! You raised over £1,100! The next meeting will be in the coffee lounge at St. John's on Tuesday 15th March 2:00- 3:30pm. We have been very fortunate to be trained and supported by Princess Alice Hospice, who will continue to work with us to provide this needed service for our community.

Memories of the Choir

It was interesting to read John Rowe's account of his time in the choir in February's OMN. I took over from Geoffrey Sayers when he retired in 1966. By that time the choir consisted of 6 boys, 4 ladies and 4 men. Most of the adults were very capable having been members for many years. I made it my priority to bring the treble section up to strength. Like my predecessor I paid an annual visit to the Parochial School to recruit boys and eventually, by the mid-1070s, brought numbers up to about 15. These boys had a great time with the choir and a number of them were able to participate in courses run by the Royal School of Music, the pinnacle being membership of the cathedral singers. On one or two occasions as many as 6 members of St John's were singing evensong in one of our cathedrals.

When I took over, the main musical highlights for the choir were the Carol service and an annual Passion performance on Palm Sunday. This continued for about 10 years until the latter was dropped to be replaced by more frequent anthems and also full Cathedral style choral evensongs on special occasions e.g. Easter and Patronal festival. Shirley Sylvester was a great help as assistant organist on some of these occasions and could always be relied upon to be there when needed. In 1976 she married Maurice Jackson, a stalwart of the basses (his first wife Grace had sadly died a few years earlier) and they moved away to start a new life in Oxfordshire.

Meanwhile the boys continued to flourish, many of them gaining the various awards offered by the RSCM, and a few reaching the pinnacle of the coveted St Nicholas Award. By the time I relinquished my position of Director of Music the choir had achieved a total of 41 awards.

As we went through the late 1980s' patterns of life changed and it became harder to fill the stalls with new blood. People were doing so many different activities and the level of commitment needed to maintain standards was no longer there. That situation still pertains today. The need for young people, girls and boys, to take up the baton and run with it is more urgent than ever – after all, where are the altos, tenors and basses of the future? The English Choral tradition is unique and is a treasure which must not be buried.

Barry Eaton

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Recitals 2022

It was good last October to return to normal "live" recitals. Despite limited advertising (because of covid uncertainty), a good turnout resulted with over £500 raised for church funds . Many thanks to those who came.

This year's recitals take place on Saturdays 23rd April and 8th October with one at St James on 18th June , all at 7.30pm. I tend to build recitals around composer anniversaries and there is a bumper crop this year :- Nicolas de Grigny (1672-1793), Louis D'Aquin (1694-1772), Johann Ernest Bach(1772-1777), Cesar Franck (1822-1890) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). Chief among those are De Grigny and Franck. Much of the former's works are based on plainsong tones whilst the latter may be considered the founder of the modern French organ school, I will be including seven of his compositions in this year's recitals – including all three chorals (Nos. 1 & 3 at St Johns and No.2 at St James).

Whatever our feelings about the French they have a long history of producing first rate organists and magnificent instruments for the performance of their works. It is difficult to do justice to them on our smaller parish church organs. They flourish on large instruments in big spaces.

One other anniversary this year is that of Felix Borowski(1872-1956) a little known composer of mixed Polish and British descent , born in this country but became a naturalised citizen of the USA. His first sonata, well worth hearing, will conclude the recital at St James.

I hope this brief summary will whet your appetites for what should be a great year for organ music. Our first recital on April 23rd falls very appropriately on International Organ Day.

Barry Eaton

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, OLD MALDEN

ORGAN RECITAL

**given by
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Saturday 23rd April 2022

at 7.30pm

Includes works by

**César Franck, Nicolas De Grigny &
J S Bach**

Admission by Programme £10.00

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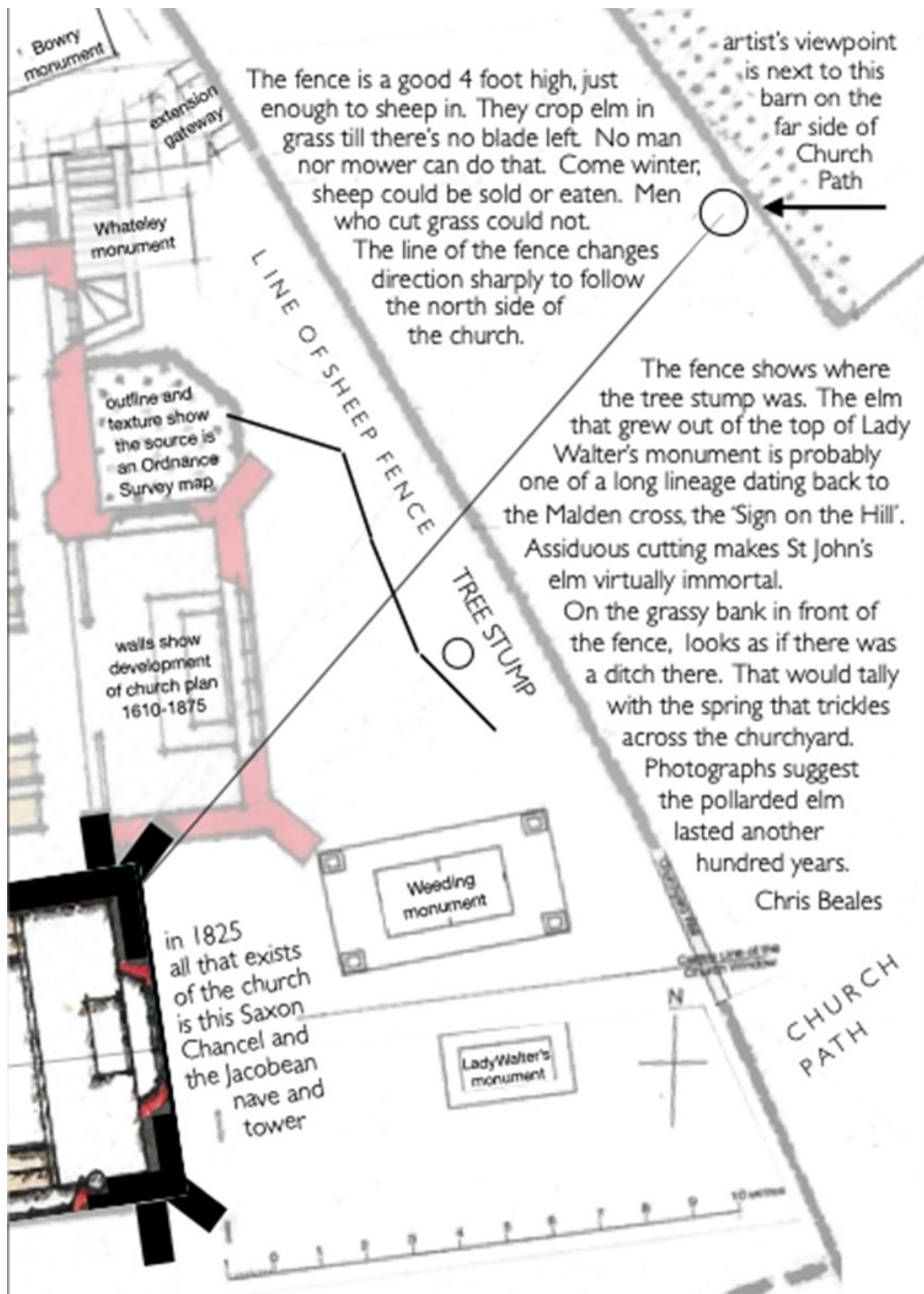
Where, in 1825, was this tree stump?

It is being pollarded. It's already been pollarded many times. It must be an elm tree. Pollard elms provide good fodder for the vicar's horse, or even the farmer's cows. Strewn on muddy lanes like ours, its branches would have made 'corduroy road', ironing out the ruts and puddles for the wooden wheels of farm carts, making a smoother, cleaner path for the carriages, for the funerals and the weddings.



The angle of this roof-ridge records the artist's viewpoint - about 18 metres from this buttress. He can see its left side, foreshortened. This shows the direction from which he made the drawing. (Today, only that side can be seen. The rest is built into the Victorian extension wall).

With that viewpoint discovered, each fence post can be plotted on a plan. Their heights on the lithograph are different. This shows how far each one is from the artist. The stump is outside, just outside, the fence.



Bowry monument

extension gateway

Whateley monument

Outline and texture show the source is an Ordnance Survey map.

walls show development of church plan 1610-1875

in 1825 all that exists of the church is this Saxon Chancel and the Jacobean nave and tower

Weeding monument

Lady Walter's monument

artist's viewpoint is next to this barn on the far side of Church Path

The fence is a good 4 foot high, just enough to sheep in. They crop elm in grass till there's no blade left. No man nor mower can do that. Come winter, sheep could be sold or eaten. Men who cut grass could not.

The line of the fence changes direction sharply to follow the north side of the church.

The fence shows where the tree stump was. The elm that grew out of the top of Lady Walter's monument is probably one of a long lineage dating back to the Malden cross, the 'Sign on the Hill'. Assiduous cutting makes St John's elm virtually immortal.

On the grassy bank in front of the fence, looks as if there was a ditch there. That would tally with the spring that trickles across the churchyard.

Photographs suggest the pollarded elm lasted another hundred years.

Chris Beales



With things opening up again please help raise much-needed donations for St John's Old Malden - Repairs Fund when you plan ahead and arrange things to do! From booking staycations and getaways to tickets for concerts or other fun activities, remember to use #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for us. Book now: <http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u>

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Gardener's Corner

Some things to think about in preparation for Spring

In terms of gardening, March is the last month of the winter and it is an opportunity to prepare for better weather. You may want to consider:

1. If there is any digging or cultivation of the soil to be done, this is a good time to complete that work.
2. Rose bush pruning was always carried out in March but the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) now recommends that rose bushes in the South be pruned around mid-February. If you think that your rose bushes need pruning, further advice is available by googling “rhs/rose pruning”, it lists out all the rose pruning for the various types of rose, rambler etc but most rose plants in the garden will fall under the category of ‘Floribunda and Hybrid Tea’.
3. March is a good time to buy vegetable and flower seeds. There are the traditional seed houses like Suttons, Dobies, Marshall (no relation!), and the gold standard of seed houses is Thompson and Morgan. Seeds are also available at hardware shops and DIY stores. During the pandemic, seed suppliers have been inundated with requests for supplies, leading to the circulation of some old seed, which is less viable, and also stocks have run out, so best to buy early.
4. This is the month to carry out early seed sowing for plants like leeks.
5. March is also the ideal time to plant onion sets. There are many ways to grow onions - one is growing them from sets, and this method is widely used on allotments. A set is a very small onion which should be planted in mild weather in mid-March and will be ready to harvest in July.

If you would like me to write about a particular topic please let me know.

Keith Marshall

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