# **Old Malden News**



## The Parish Magazine of St John the Baptist, Malden

May 2025

50p

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# **Old Malden News**

The Parish Magazine of St John the Baptist Parish Church Malden Church Road, Worcester Park KT4 7RY

Please send any articles or other material to: St John the Baptist Parish Office 020 8330 2817 administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk

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Copy date for the magazine is the 15th of the month and please only send submissions in Microsoft Word.

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# St John the Baptist Parish Church, Malden **Directory**

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Parish Website: Parish Office:	www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk	

To receive the Parish Mailing please scan the

QR code with your smart phone camera



## **Services for May**



#### St John's is OPEN

St John's is open 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

Coffee hosted by Mothers' Union after the first Wednesday service of the month.

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

On Easter Sunday I preached off the top of my head, not something I'm that keen on doing but I had run out of time with everything on over Holy Week. I told myself that if a vicar can't preach the Easter message then they ought to give up. That evening I watched our updated livestreaming on Youtube and watched the service. The new camera and sound setup works really well and the broadcast is impressive. Since I hadn't any notes, watching the sermon reminded me of what I said, and that has stuck with me since. Not because of magnificent oratory, but the issues raised.

Living Hope, the Church of England's theme for Lent was very helpful because it made us look at our Bible readings for Lent and Holy Week from an unexpected angle. It enabled us to see things from a different perspective and perhaps discover something we hadn't thought about before. Easter Day was no different.

When we look at the Easter story we usually focus on what happened to Jesus. It's natural because he is the centre, his experience of the passion, his death, and resurrection capture our attention. What happened to Jesus is the foundation of our faith. While we hear week by week the implications of the resurrection on the Disciples in the Acts of the Apostles, we are reminded of the impact this all had on them, how it changed them dramatically from a motley crew of defeated followers to bold evangelists proclaiming the teaching of Jesus even in the Temple in the face of the authorities and crowd who had called for Jesus' execution. The journey from despair to triumph ignited a movement determined to spread God's message of love and hope in Jesus Christ to a broken and divided world. The rest is history, and we could well leave it there because these events seem so far away from us here and now, events that feel remote from our everyday experience. But the hope the Disciples experienced lives on. It has poured down the ages to people all around the world and that hope is ours for the asking.

I am aware that most of us have those times when we struggle with life,

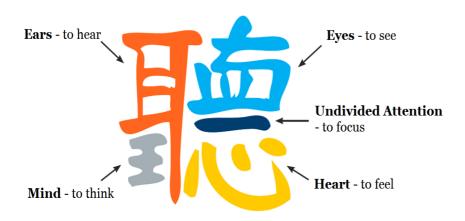
when things seem dark and dim. Work, relationships, family, and bereavement may leave us feeling a bit at sea at times. When that happens we need someone to talk to, a friend or family member who can simply listen and support us. I know that behind the façade we may project to the world, we can struggle to make sense or gain perspective of what is challenging us. Well first off is that Easter message that Jesus himself over came the greatest challenge of all, passing through a painful, humiliating death into new life. He wasn't immune to the suffering, protected from the worst humanity could do. He bore it up and carried it to the Cross where it was redeemed. In place of despair we now have hope, and this hope is his gift to all of us.

Life isn't fair, but we don't have to face it alone. God is with us every step of the way. He knows exactly how we feel in times of joy and in times of pain and sorrow. I have been personally inspired by those who faced with unimaginable illness or even death, are nonetheless determined to fight every step of the way. Brave individuals who take each day one at a time and know that they aren't alone. As the Church we are called to be a place of healing and hope. We see this in our Bereavement Café and in the friendships across the congregation and out in the community. That golden thread of love that knits us all together in God's love. It is my prayer that we can continue to be a gift to one another, to share our burdens, and help one another find our way through all that holds us back. Jesus' resurrection makes his abundant life accessible for all what want it. It is his great gift to us. So don't go it alone. I am available as are the rest of the Ministry Team. If you need to talk to someone, we are here. Let the joy of Easter transform your life, let hope live in you.

With every blessing,  $\mathcal{M}ichael$ 

# Listening - or not: the difference between hearing and listening

At a recent Lent Course session it was noted that listening is much more than hearing. Though the Chinese character which means 'to listen' carries the individual characters for ears and eyes, it does NOT include the character for mouth!



The following salutary poem was introduced in a Diocese of Southwark course about being a Friendly Listening Church. The author, present at the course, explained that the poem is an account of their own experience when they were in crisis and visited a church which advertised themselves as a listening church.

#### LISTEN

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving me advice you've not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you tell me why I shouldn't feel that way you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel that you have to do something to solve my problems, you have failed me - strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I ask is that you listen; not talk or do - just hear me, Advice is cheap - I can get advice from a newspaper or book and I can do that for myself; I'm not helpless.; maybe discouraged and faltering - but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I <u>can</u> and <u>need</u> to do for Myself you contribute to my weakness and fear.

But when you accept a simple fact that I <u>do</u> feel as I feel, *no matter how irrational,* then I can stop trying to convince you and begin to understand what is behind these irrational feelings.

And when that's clear, then I don't need advice.

Perhaps that is why prayer works sometimes for some people, because God is mute or silent.

He doesn't give advice or try to fix things.

He just listens and lets us work it out for ourselves.

So please listen, and just hear me.

**'Active Listening'** is listening using the pointers in the Chinese character above, including giving the person your undistracted attention. Don't tell them your problems, they cannot cope with yours and theirs. If it takes longer than you have time at present, suggest another meeting say in a coffee shop.

Show the person you are listening by reflecting what they tell you back at intervals (e.g. 'You said that ....; that must have been hard for you, how did you cope? – it invites them to go on with their story).

Instead of trying to solve their problems yourself, 'signpost' them to appropriate professional support, or ask for advice.

We also show we are listening by our 'body language'. Folded arms signify a barrier. Relaxed posture signifies listening mode. Facial expression can express interest as well as 'hav'nt time, judgement and impatience.

Liz and Tony

#### **R I P Michael Howe**

A number of you will remember Michael Howe who was a local pharmacist for many years. Michael and his wife Barbara were regular worshippers at the 8.00am Sunday Eucharist. Michael was a much loved family man, leaving his wife Barbara, two daughters and their families.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

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Michael Howe February 5<sup>th</sup> 1935 - January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025.
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### A life in Motor-cycle sports

Men's Thing – 10 May – Harvey Howlett

The talk at the Men's Thing in May will be about a life in British motor sports and reflect the changing face of the motor cycle industry in Britain after the second world war.

Last year my Dad and I were working on a plan for him to give a talk to the Men's thing about his career as a championship scrambles and trials motorcyclist and his life spent working in motor-sports. Dad wanted to find a way to say thank you for the Men's thing, which had given him much joy and new friendships. Sadly his final illness meant that this was not to be.

Although I'm no expert in motor-sports I'm honouring Dad's plan and giving a talk about his career, his work with Commerfords of Thames Ditton and now vanished names of British Motor-sports, such as James, Sun, Dot and Greaves.

Everyone is welcome from 10am on Saturday 10 May.

#### The Revd Stewart W.G. & Mrs Frost – taken in 1934



Although having served in the Southwark diocese all his ministerial life, Fr Frost had come from Australia where he had held the post of Rector in Rockhampton. He was vicar at St John's from 1934-1941 when Fr Kenneth Ross took over.

In the 1930s, the Parish of Old Malden was changing significantly. As Fr Ross points out in his book, in 1921 there had been just 502 people in the parish, but by 1941, the number had risen to 14,000. After the sudden death of Fr Fynes-Clinton, Fr Frost was appointed as the new incumbent. Fr. Frost's first letter in the OMN in February 1934, was addressed to his 'Dear Fellow-Workers and Parishioners'. He explained that three years in the topics had affected his wife's health thus prompting an early return. He commented on the great changes in the parish: 'building operations had proceeded so rapidly that the road from The Plough to the church had undergone a complete change'. 'Obviously, one of the first tasks that we must face is that of bringing into touch with the church the new population that is almost daily streaming into the parish... It means being missionaries in our own parish'. His message rings so true today too.



This was the Vicarage in 1934 – which Fr Frost found too damp to inhabit and which required significant repairs.

As a temporary measure, Fr Frost moved into 19 Church Road, and later 9 & 48 until the new vicarage was built. Merton College gave permission for some of the glebe land to be sold to finance a more modern and modest vicarage.

In his Easter Letter of 1934, Fr Frost announced the arrival of his new curate, Humphrey Willoughby Perry-Gore. Fr Frost had known him previously and was preparing to welcome him at the main service on Easter Day.

The parish was already an active one with reports in the Parish Magazine from the Old Malden Choral Society, Mothers' Union, Brownies, the Ladies Choir and the Sunday School. In the coming months, the Sunday School and ministry to young people was greatly expanded due to the enthusiasm and dedication by the new curate, H.W.P.G as he became known. See next month's OMN for more information about him.

Meanwhile Fr Frost had to take things easy for three months as his health was in a poor state and in July, Revd Perry-Gore was in charge of the parish. Unfortunately, H.W.P.G was also taken ill at this time and his brother stepped in to help provide cover.

Earlier this year, a niece of Revd Perry-Gore contacted us saying that she had found some pages from one of her uncle's photo albums. These contained several photos (some of which are included in this article) together with cuttings taken from the 1934 OMN which related to his interest in his ministry to young people and particularly the Choir Boy's cricket team. With all the new houses in the area, there were a lot of young families and young people and so St John's was an important focus for young people's activities in the parish.

In the 30s, the parish must have been like a huge building site and the transformation from a quiet 'village' was significant. Fr Frost commented that he was trying to visit everyone in the parish but it was a huge task. He encountered suspicion when knocking on doors and said that people thought he was either the gas man or a tax collector. For someone whose health was not robust, the burgeoning parish must have been very challenging. So much so that in 1941 he retired due to poor health.

Yet in 1934, the Choir was beginning to flourish with the added attraction of the boys being recruited to the very successful cricket team – more of that next month. Photo from HWPG's album for 1934.



Marilyn Burkett

Being a reporter at LBC there is never an ordinary day, or a dull shift.

I feel enormously privileged to be able to elevate people's stories, and tell them to the millions of people who tune into the radio station every week.

It was an enormous privilege to report from Normandy last year, on the 80th anniversary of D-Day, alongside veterans who landed on those beaches. I will never forget those conversations, and the precious time I was granted to be in the company of those who are the best of Britain. To say it was priceless is an understatement.

Reporting from across the United States during the recent presidential election was something I could only have dreamed of when doing my A-Level politics at Richard Challoner. It was surreal to experience history being made. I attended (and was nearly ejected from) a Donald Trump rally in the flesh, engaged with frustrated Republican voters in West Virginia and interviewed ardent Democrats in Washington DC. Polarising views, which allow you to grasp the deep divisions in the country.

Closer to home there is never a 'regular day'. In one instance I was first to report the distressing news of a cat that was being 'blown up' in Northamptonshire (by a parish councillor...), the next I was interviewing then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak from a fishmongers in Essex, just a few months later was switching on the Old Malden lights at Plough Green - and catching up with friends from St John's!

Then the next moment I was in Downing Street as one of a handful of journalists to witness Sir Keir Starmer become the first G7 leader to take a HIV test, and got an exclusive interview with the PM, and I interviewed inmates training to be railway engineers at HMP Highpoimt - soon to become the UKs largest prison.

It's thrilling, exhausting but completely rewarding job. And to receive the title of Reporter of the Year from IRN (Independent Radio News) was very special.

Henry Riley

## St John's Reading Group May 2025

We selected two books for April which were so very different from each other:

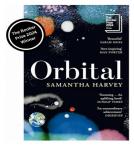
Small Things like These by Claire Keegan and Orbital by Samantha Harvey (Booker prize-winner 2024)



'Small Things Like These' is a very moving novel which restores faith in humanity. It's a memorable novel you don't want to end – or perhaps, you wish to find out what happens next. Set in an 1985 Irish town, Bill Furlong is a busy coal and timber merchant. He is married to Eileen and they have five daughters. He never knew his father and he was just twelve when his mother died. The local convent was run by the Good Shepherd nuns, teaching

young girls but they also ran a laundry, very popular with local businesses.

There were rumours that this was a cover for a mother and baby home – for young women fallen on hard times. Bill makes a shocking discovery when he makes his coal delivery to the convent and ultimately takes action himself. At the end of this novella, the author refers to the Magdalen laundries, the last one closing as late as 1996. It is not known how many young girls were incarcerated in these institutions – maybe as many as 30,000. These institutions were run by the Catholic Church and the Irish State. A very haunting little book, beautifully written. It reminds us that there is hope and there are caring people in this world. 9/10



Orbital by Samantha Harvey (Booker prize-winner 2024) is a very different novel – as six astronauts on the space station orbit our beautiful planet but their thoughts are never far from their lives on earth. Some of the descriptions of Earth are very poetic and we seem to underestimate the beauty of our fragile planet. Way back in 1968, the astronauts of Apollo 8 read the creation story from Genesis whilst orbiting the Earth and so in this book, reflections about humanity and the

existence of God arise as the space station makes 16 orbits around the Earth in 24 hours. How will Climate Change affect what is seen from the Space Station? As the astronauts reflect: what is life without Earth? A thought provoking novel and a worthy winner of the 2024 Booker Prize. 9/10

For May, our choice is The Running Grave by Robert Galbraith (Cormoran Strike book 7). This makes up for the two very short novels in April. Another case for Cormoran and Robin with a verv long list of characters. We love a challenge!





A novel which I have just finished is entitled Midnight Midnight Blue by the Dutch author, Simone van der Vlugt. Set Blue in 17<sup>th</sup> century Amsterdam, Alkmaar and Delft, it traces the life of a young woman who leaves the family farm and goes the Amsterdam. Ultimately, as an accomplished artist, she works in one of the Delft Blue potteries, just as the Dutch manufacture of 'blue' porcelain is popular and much sought after. The

author has researched the origins of the Delft Blue and woven it with a human story against a background of plague, love and murder. One of those novels you just have to keep reading .....

The latest book by Michael Morpurgo entitled 'Spring', the story of a season, caught my attention. I heard an interview with the

author on Radio 4 – he talked about the coming of spring on his farm in Devon. As we have been waiting for spring to arrive after a long grey winter, it seems just the tonic we need.

Perhaps more well known as an author of children's books, this is a gentle appreciation of spring and nature – suitable for all ages.



Our next meeting will be on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May at 8.00pm in the Marílvn Church Coffee Lounge.

#### Not One lota of a Difference

#### Celebrating 1700 years of the First Council of Nicaea

by Harvey Howlett

Last month I introduced a little series celebrating 1700 years of the first ecumenical Council of Nicaea. This month, as we continue to celebrate Easter, what do we really believe about Jesus?

Christianity was decriminalised under the Edict of Milan in 313 and with the Church no longer under threat of persecution, debates and theological disputes begin to flourish.

The biggest early dispute completely divided the church over the nature of God and Christ. The argument, which initially arose in North Africa, is named after the Presbyter Arius who maintained that the Son of God was a Creature, made from nothing; and that he was God's first production, before all ages. Arius argued that everything else was created through the Son so that only the Son was directly created and begotten of God; Arius argued that "were [Christ] in the truest sense a son, He must have come after the Father, therefore the time obviously was when He was not, and hence He was a finite being." But if Christ was a creature he was not true God, but a being and did not share equality with God.

So the Council at Nicea was called. All sides claimed scriptures for their support and the majority of the bishops at the Council ultimately agreed upon a creed, which included the word *homoousios*, meaning "consubstantial", or "same in essence". which was incompatible with the Arian ideas of a creator and a creature. Some tried to argue for a different word *homoiousios* (note the additional i) which means of a similar substance to the Father – but similar is not the same, and this was rejected by the majority.

Sadly the Council that was meant to end the debate simply got the argument raging for the next 55 years. But it was these parts of the Creed from Nicea that were eventually accepted when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire in 381.

The form of the Creed written at Nicea 1700 years ago. contains the words:

... Light of Light, True God of True God, begotten not made, of one essence (*homoousios*) with the Father, by whom all things were made

It is this inheritance of faith which we still proclaim today.

However, there is one little aside. This dispute may also be a possible origin of the English phrase 'not one lota of difference' As you can see a single 'i' or lota – from *homoousios* to *homoiousios* – can cause a whole lot of trouble.



## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, OLD MALDEN

celebrates The 150th Anniversary Of the Enlargement of the Church An Historical Narrative by Dr Alastair K Daniel With Choral items of the period Sung by An augmented choir Conducted by BARRY EATON Accompanied by SIMON HARVEY (organ) Saturday 14th June 2025 at 7.30pm

Admission by Programme £15.00 (Includes refreshments) All proceeds to the RESTORE fund.



You may be wondering how the Restore Project is going after its inauguration.

**To recap,** the Restore Project aims to undertake urgent repairs to the crumbling brickwork of the church tower, its cracked parapets, the leaking roofs, and vestry. This is necessary to provide a safe sound building to enable us to be a hub for community based social care activities and exploration of our local heritage and natural environment. The overall estimated cost is £450,000 excluding VAT.

#### Where to start?

Our thinking is summarised below

Overall complex and costly repairs (£450,000) Requires series of grants to fund Undertake in stages Select most urgent repair

#### V

Tower repair most urgent to prevent loss of use Highest single cost (£270,000) Phase work into feasible steps.

PHASE 1: REPAIR TOWER BUTTRESS
Funds available. Grants awarded by
Marshall's Charity (£20,000)
Surrey Churches Preservation Trust (£2,500)

**Phase 1 work started on March 17<sup>th</sup>.** Two firms specialising repairing historic buildings are undertaking the buttress repair. Universal Stone are replacing crumbling bricks and mortar. H.G Matthews, are making new hand-made bricks. The estimated time to completion is 6-8 weeks.

Crumbling buttress brick New hand-made bricks







**PHASES 2 & 3** will complete the overall project. Our grant committee has selected suitable organisations. None fund just 'bricks & mortar' unless accompanied by community projects, which our project does. Our grant committee is compiling applications to several organisations to secure funding (e.g. National Heritage Lottery, Garfield-Weston, National Churches Trust and others). This is a lengthy process requiring a lot of information, not to mention time.

Old Friends and New Fancies by Sybil Britton

This book is alleged to be the first sequel to the works of Jane Austen. Published in 1913. Little is known of Sybil Brinton 1874-1928.

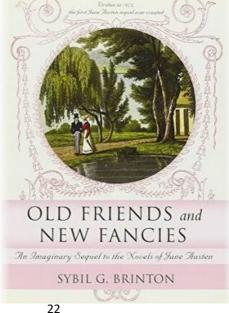
Using characters from 6 of Jane Austen novels and keeping to the spirit of them she deals with assorted pairs of lovers faced with the difficulties of the class structure in Regency times.

New romances for the unmarried characters eg Georgina Darcy and Kitty Bennet from Pride and Prejudice, Mary Crawford, William Price and Tom Bertram from Mansfield Park. James Morland and Isabella Thorpe from Northanger Abbey.

Many characters from Persuasion, Sense and Sensibility and Emma also appear in various roles.

As I read 3 JA books while in Australia I was really pleased to read Sybil Brinton's sequel to these books.

If you want happy endings and you're a JA fan this is the book for you.



Anne Beales



This message is to thank Mrs Pat Lovegrove for giving her time and effort to manage St. John the Baptist's Xmas Party for over 40 years; also a huge thanks to Pat's team that work in the kitchen and to those that provide the entertainment to make Xmas day more special. I was invited originally by my good friend and neighbour many years ago to attend. It is a tonic for anyone that would normally be alone at xmas. Pat also supports the church in other ways - so once again thank-you to a very dedicated and caring lady. From Christine, Brian, Pat Mason, Debbie, Jessica, Anita and Teresa. Recipe for May....

My favourite tea loaf – very easy to make and it tastes good too.

170 g sultanas170 g raisins300 ml of hot Earl Grey tea2 eggs250 gm self raising flour200 gm of light soft brown sugar

Soak fruit in the Earl Grey tea overnight so that the fruit absorbs most of the liquid.

Add in all the other ingredients and mix together.

Put in a lined 2lb loaf tin and cook on Gas 4 for I hr 15 minutes.

(350 Fahrenheit or 180 Celsius)

Take out of tin and allow to cool.

Marílyn

So if you have a recipe you would like to share – just send it in!

St John's Knitting & Crochet Group

Work in progress.....

Would you like to learn to crochet? If so, come along and join us on the last Thursday of the month in the Church Coffee Lounge.

A 4mm crochet hook and a ball of DK yarn is all you need. Our May meeting will be on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May from 2.00pm - 4.00pm.

Open to all - do come and join us! Learn to knit, follow a pattern, take up crochet! Or bring your embroidery or tapestry! Or just come along for a friendly chat and cup of tea.

Marílyn



#### Trip to Australia. March '25



I was quite apprehensive taking this trip aged 87, though I have been going regularly every 2 years to visit my daughter, Jane and her family. My UK family checked I had insurance to fly my corpse back! I was worried leaving Chris for 3 weeks as we don't know how much longer we have! On that

cheerful and positive note I headed off to Oz.

I flew with Emirates stopping off in Dubai. On both flights I had 3 seats to myself so I could spread out and sleep between reading, eating and watching movies. I saw Conclave which I missed when it was doing the rounds. 22 hours later I was met in Brisbane by Jane, Mitch (her son) and my latest great grandchild, Ash (9months) 4 generations!

We explored Brisbane just a few days after the cyclone, sandbags everywhere, but Mitch said they just had a bit of rain. We visited the Botanic Gardens and the night life!

2 hour flight to Townsville to catchup with another grandson Dan and his partner Mel. After a few days there a 5 hour drive up to Jane and Mike's home in Yungaburra, N Queensland, in the Tablelands. It was the rainy season and in the Tropics. So we had rain most days, storms and sunshine. It was very warm.

I hadn't been to Tablelands before. There are volcanic lakes and huge areas covered in Rainforest. There was a river at the bottom of the garden where platypuses lived. I only got a glimpse of one. Also tree kangaroos. One evening we walked by the river looking for the platypus. We crossed on a narrow bridge that swung about but on the way back there was a long black snake! We slowly walked behind it with Mike stamping as it slithered across the bridge. With fruit bats in their hundreds flying overhead. A night to remember!







Mike has two horses and a yacht. So I was well entertained. Lake Tineroo is huge where we spent a lot of time sailing. Unfortunately Jane's car was damaged by a rock thrown at the windscreen and driver's window while we were sailing. The police were amazingly helpful. They noticed the car was damaged, found out who it belonged to, went to the house to be told we were sailing. They phoned and waited 30 mins for us to sail to them while they waited by the car. 4 of them! When I remarked that wouldn't happen in UK I was told there was so little crime that they were probably delighted to have a case!

As I left I said this is probably my last visit. They replied 'you said that last time! So we'll see you at your next last visit!'

Anne Beales







#### A musical celebration at Malden

One hundred and fifty years ago the congregation of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, in Church Road, Old Malden, were preparing for the laying of the foundation stone of a major extension of the church. This year the present congregation are arranging several events to celebrate the anniversary, with a focus on music.

The present church site may have been a place of worship for 1,000 years. The name Malden is believed to derive from 'Mael dune', or 'the Cross on the Hill', and possibly an outdoor cross once stood here, used by travelling preachers. Near the south-east corner of the church, some of the flint and stone walling of the old chancel, now part of the Lady Chapel, may date from Anglo-Saxon times. As we enter the church through the porch, below the tower, we are in the part of the church that was rebuilt in brick in c1609-11.

When the Revd William Chetwynd Stapylton arrived as Vicar in 1850, the church still consisted of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century brick nave, now the south aisle, and the old chancel. To the left, where there are now arches between the south aisle and nave, was the north wall of the building. The church needed restoration, and the architect T G (later Sir Thomas) Jackson was called in. The *Surrey Comet*, on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1863, reported recollections of the 'oldest inhabitant' that at one time 'the church was so completely buried under ivy, that the tenants of the manor farm were constantly in the habit of climbing onto the roof to collect the eggs from the hen's nests', and went on to say that under Mr Jackson – 'a rising young architect of great promise' – the church had been re-seated with open seats (replacing box pews), the roof had been opened up by removing a ceiling, new tiled floors had been laid, and a new font installed.

After the railway arrived in 1859, the population grew, from 283 in 1851 to

416 in 1871 and 525 in 1881. By 1866-7 it was already clear that the church should be extended, and initially a lean-to north aisle was added. Soon, however, it became apparent that a more radical solution was needed, to accommodate the growing number of parishioners.

A meeting of the parishioners was held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1874, and it was decided 'that it is advisable to attempt an Enlargement of the Church'. A committee was appointed, and three architects submitted plans. Once again the proposals of Thomas Jackson were favoured. He suggested removing the lean-to aisle, building a new nave and chancel, and retaining the existing church as a south aisle. This would provide an extra 172 seats, making a total of 335, and providing improved accommodation for school children.

The *Surrey Comet* reported on  $12^{th}$  December 1874, 'By this means the number of sittings will be more than doubled... whilst the appearance of the little ancient church on the side on which it is approached from the road will be but very little altered. The cost of this improvement is estimated at £2,000 – a very large sum to raise in so small a parish. But the committee, nothing daunted, set to work, and... in little more than a month's time no less a sum than £1,300 has been promised...'

Mr Jackson's plan was adopted at a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1875, by which time the amount promised had risen to £1,886 13s 0d. The *Surrey Comet* reported in its edition of Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1875 that the 'interesting ceremony of laying the foundation stone' had taken place on the preceding Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> June, at 4pm. The existing church had been decorated for the occasion: 'Above the communion tables were panels with bunches of flowers in the centre, and above these the text "Christ, the chief Corner Stone".'

After the service, Mr and Mrs Shand, the tenants of Fullbrooks (which stood between Avondale Avenue, Perry How and Manor Way) in the 1870s-80s, provided luncheon for numerous guests, including Bishop and Mrs Browne. Catering was by Ring and Brymer of Cornhill, an old-established firm which provided catering for numerous City events, such as Coronation banquets given by the Corporation of London. Mr Shand proposed a toast to the Bishop, who replied that 'he could not see any hardship in coming a few miles to worship in a church enlarged as this had been, and then to be received so hospitably afterwards. If they had grown cold in coming there through the snow, that had been dispelled by the warmth of their reception.'

The Vicar also spoke: 'He looked back on the past and saw unnumbered acts of kindness from many; he looked at the present and saw the work completed; and to the future, and saw how many blessings might be associated with the material fabric.' He also mentioned some specific gifts: Mrs Barnes gave the lectern, Mr Blake gave gasoliers for the west end, and a lady gave gas standards to light the chancel. According to the *Epsom Journal*, the final cost was about £2,700.

Today's congregation are not only marking this anniversary, but also working to preserve the church for the future through their Restore Project: repairs are needed to the parapet and roof and, most urgently, to the tower buttress where some of the 400-year-old bricks are crumbling. Scaffolding went up in March this year, and suitable handmade bricks have been obtained from specialist brickmaker H G Matthews (more details at www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk).

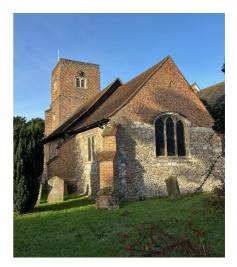
The first event to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enlargement will be on Saturday 14th June, a few days before the anniversary of the laying of

the foundation stone. This will be an historical-cum-choral evening at 7.30pm with refreshments including cake. It will include an historical narrative by Dr Alastair Daniel, and an augmented choir will perform a number of large-scale anthems, by composers who were active in the 1870s. Tickets cost £15, with proceeds going towards St John's Restore Fund, and can be obtained via the parish administrator (administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk).

There will be an organ recital on October 11th at 7.30pm, which will also feature music from the 1870s. Tickets are £12, available on the door. Finally, on Sunday 7th December, there will be a cathedral-style Choral Evensong with augmented choir, to celebrate the actual day of the consecration.

Our illustrations (with thanks to Marilyn Burkett) show the flint and stone walls of the earliest part of the church and the Jacobean tower, and the interior of the 1875 building.







There are boxes on the church porch bench for your donations to the Foodbank. Foodbanks are now vital to so many people and our support is really important. Please donate if you are able.

Tinned meat, Long-life milk, Coffee, Rice, Pasta sauce, Squash, Instant mash, Tinned vegetables, Pot Noodles, Oils, Ketchup and mayonnaise, Sanitary towels, Toilet paper, Washing up liquid, Household cleaning products, Washing machine tablets, Shaving foam, Men's and women's deodorant, Tinned potatoes, Crisps and treats, Tinned tomatoes, Shampoo and conditioner, Tooth paste and toothbrushes, Biscuits, Jam, Pasta, Cereals, Pulses, Baked beans, Soup, Tea.

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## The Men's Thing

Spring/summer programme of talks held on the 2nd Saturday of each month in the church extension. Tea, coffee biscuits etc. available from 10am for a 10.30am start.

**May 10th**- A talk by Harvey Howlett on his father's life in the motorcycle trade.

June 14th- A talk by Malcolm Sutton - " A young engineer in "Nepal".



In partnership with Princess Alice Hospice, St John's runs an informal support group for all those experiencing the loss of a loved one. The next meeting will be in the coffee lounge at St. John's on Tuesday 20th May 2:00- 3:30pm.



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: <u>http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u</u>

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