

Rector's Letter September 2019

Dear Friends,

September 29th The Feast of St Michael and All Angels – 'Ministry Sunday'

Have you ever seen or experienced an angel? Many people say they have. I don't know how much you think about the angels, or even what you believe about them, but the Church has a special festival in its calendar each year to celebrate them. This year it falls on a Sunday, so the angels will be the focus of our readings in church, and we can reflect together a bit about what we might believe about their presence and activity in our lives.

In the Collect for that Sunday we shall praise God because he has '*ordained and constituted the ministries of angels and mortals in a wonderful order*'. This is rather an inspiring statement, because it implies that any service ('ministry') which *any one* of us offers in and through the church is part of a much bigger picture and pattern of ordered service, created by God for his purposes and glory. We are, in some mysterious way, all of one company with the angels, serving God's Kingdom!

I am proposing that we keep St Michael and All Angels' Day ('Michaelmas') as 'Ministry Sunday' at St Mary's, when all the different forms of service in the life of the church can be celebrated, affirmed and blessed. Service to God through the church takes many forms, from flower arranging to bellringing, singing to the organising of special events, administration and computer work to churchwardens and children's workers. It also, of course, includes the work of our various official lay ministers, both licensed and authorised, and of the ordained ministers of the parish, too. So, one way or another, ministry in and for the church involves, or has involved, nearly all of us. Lots to celebrate and be thankful for as we also celebrate the ministry of the angels.

As it happens, Michaelmas Day this year on the eve of the 40th anniversary of my entry into the Church of England's 'official' ministry, because I was made Deaconess in Southwark Cathedral on 30th September 1979. (Eventually, in 1987 I was made a Deacon, and in 1994 a Priest – so this year has also marked for me 25 years as a Priest.) For this reason, I would like to celebrate God's goodness over all those years with you and will be providing celebratory drinks and nibbles for everyone after the 10 am service. Please come along and join us. I am inviting those other ordained members of the team who can be there, also to give thanks for their years in ministry – in some cases, many years more than mine!

Website

On a different topic, I have been asked to draw everyone's attention to our website, www.stmaryslinton.org.uk. Please do consult it for information, as well as encouraging other people to view it. We shall shortly be asking particular people to be responsible for the upkeep of current information on particular pages. But, above all, if you want to know what is going on in the Church or Pavilion, or whether they are 'free' on a particular date, please do turn to the Church Calendar, which is kept up to date by Anne Parry-Smith our Administrator – and if you organise any event in church or the Pavilion, make sure she knows about it, so she can enter it on the calendar.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Your Rector,
Maggie.