The Athelney Magazine



Covering the church parishes of Burrowbridge, Lyng, North Curry and Stoke St Gregory

October 2023

Who's Who

Details of other roles can be found on the website, athelneybenefice.com/whoswho

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The Athelney Bulletin

As well as this monthly Athelney Magazine, there is a weekly publication available online and in each church. The Athelney Bulletin is emailed out each weekend and printed copies can be found in readiness for Sunday worship. The bulletin contains all the readings for each Sunday and also news and notices of upcoming events. If you would like to receive this bulletin in your email either contact vicar@athelneybenefice.com or complete the form on the benefice website,



Coffee, Tea and Fellowship across the Benefice

Each month there is a pattern of gatherings, featuring tea, coffee, cakes and conversation. All are open to all. All are wonderful opportunities to chat and all the cakes are guaranteed to be of a very high standard. Bacon butties are expected to return in the Autumn … in the meantime, there are cakes!

You can find the coffee mornings here:

Burrowbridge

1st Saturday of each month, from 10am to 12pm in church. Free to all.



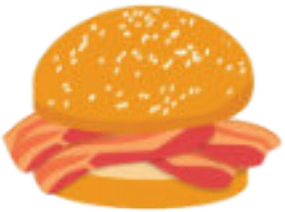
Lyng

4th Saturday of each month, from 10.30 am the village hall.

North Curry

Wednesdays at 10am in church.

Stoke St Gregory



The Levellers meet at 2.30pm every third Tuesday in the Williams Hall. A time of conversation and fellowship, often with a visiting speaker.

Thank you to everyone who helps with these events

Useful Information to help you and the editorial team

Copy deadline is **14th October** for the November Magazine;

Please send **content** in an email attachment (ideally a Microsoft Word documenet) to magazine@athelneybenefice.com. Please add "CONTENT" to the subject line. If you are sending content pertaining to more than one thing, please send separate attachments and for each please make it clear in which edition it is to appear. Please use 12-point Arial font and ensure that it fits into a maximum of 2 A5 pages where possible. To check this set your word document to be in landscape orientation with 2 columns.

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Any questions please send an email and one of the team will get back to you as soon as possible. Please use the group emails provided rather than sending things direct to one person.

Many thanks,
The Editorial Team

Prayer Across the Benefice

Prayer is at the heart of the Christian faith. It is a time to speak to God. Prayer is not simply kneeling and holding your hands together. It is not necessarily about sitting quietly and looking ever so Holy. Prayer can be a time of extreme frustration or a moment of utter joy when you can't stand still. It may happen when you read a poem or sing a song. Perhaps you have a favourite way to pray.

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A gratuitous photo of St Gregory's with a humorous sign.

Rush hour was dreadful but thankfully people found solace and sanctuary in the parish church…

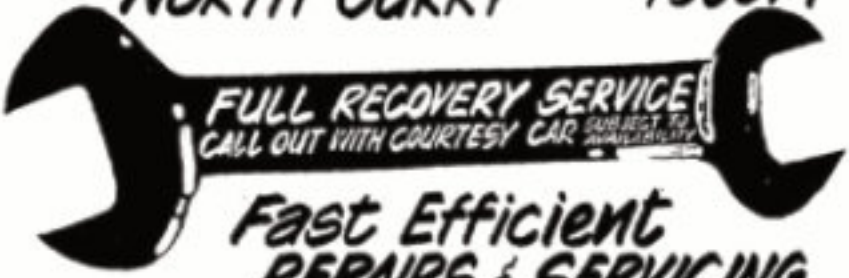
(We had a small gap to fill… [Ed])

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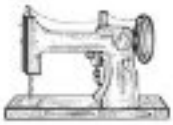
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The Athelney Benefice



Confirmed? Just checking

Revd Dr Simon Bale, Vicar of Athelney

I became a Christian towards the end of the last millennium. No. Scratch that. I didn't become a Christian. I realised I was one. No. Scratch that. I stopped pretending I wasn't one. No… Oh, I don't know. It's all very difficult to explain without using hand signals, a bit of music, some poetry and some sticky-backed plastic. Probably.

One thing I do know is that on 16th June 2002 I was "confirmed into the Church of England" by the then Bishop of Swindon, Michael Doe. It was at St Cuthbert's Church in Brislington, Bristol and I was one of six candidates. I know it was that date because it is Bloomsday, the day in 1904 that James Joyce chose as the foundation for his novel *Ulysses*: and I remember things like that.

I remember the service well. I was asked to read from Isaiah 61 (the spirit of the Lord is upon me…) and the Bishop admonished us for making too much noise towards the end of the Eucharist. I kid you not: he asked for us all to be quiet as he prayed the post-communion prayer. Oops. We were all soooo excited to be part of something new I guess.

As I write this, I realise that that was twenty-one years ago. I suddenly feel more ancient than ever. Half my adult life I have been a "confessing Christian" (if thats the way to describe it…) and for a quarter of it I have been a priest.

But, what is confirmation? What is it all about and why does it matter? This is what the Church of England website says:

> "*Being confirmed is a choice not a requirement – the Church of England doesn't have a formal membership in that sense - anyone is welcome to come along to church, worship and be a part of the church community. Being confirmed is simply a sign of your commitment and involvement*."

It was my choice. And it is the choice of anyone. But I don't recall it being about choice. I simply remember that it was the next step… to where? It wasn't a formal step towards God. After all, I had already confessed that I was a Christian. For some churches (and vicars) it used to be a necessary step to being "permitted" to receive the sacrament at the altar rail. In those days I think it was in my church. It most certainly isn't for me. I don't stop anyone at all from sharing the Lord's Supper. But even so, twenty-one years on I would still get confirmed because for me it is a

mature declaration that I continue to hold firmly the vows said for me on my behalf when I was baptised as a little baby in 1962. I was baptised in the Congregational Church and so by that tradition the whole church acted as my Godparents. I left the church as an adolescent and returned twenty plus years later and felt I needed publicly to declare that I still lived according to the words said over me aged 6 months.

Folks, that remains the only reason to be confirmed, in my view. "The only reason": it's quite a reason, in fact. To declare, publicly before other Christians that you will live in the way that Jesus taught. To love others and you are loved by God. To seek the welfare of the poor and dispossessed, to speak honestly about the social injustices in the world, to live according to Micah 6:8: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Simple, eh? Right.

You don't need to be a Christian to know what is good and right. Nobody needs to be confirmed to know that it is good to be caring for others, to feed the hungry, to set the oppressed free, to give sight to the blind and so on. Yet, somehow, it really does focus the mind rather beautifully to consider just how we can go about it as disciples.

Confirmation is an act of discipleship. It says to the world, and to God, that you are here, ready and waiting, praying and praising, ready to follow *The Way* of Jesus, A way that asks us to show patience, understanding and concern for the world, to live according the Sermon on the Mount. To be meek, filled with the spirit, to be mercifiul, to stand firm against injustice and to speak openly of the abundance all around us.

Golly… that sounds like hard work. All that standing firm, humility and pacifism. It is. Of course it is. If it were easy, I suppose it would already happen. Being confirmed gives a purpose to the aspirations. It is important, when being confirmed, to realise that it is a commitment. A decision. A direction of travel, towards discipleship and the deep shalom of God.

I am not one for grand gestures of spirituality or of mysterious encounters, but I do recall very much the "spirit of the Lord" upon me that day in June 2002. I felt it again as I was ordained in 2013. It is a moment of tranquil beauty and I would encourage anyone and everyone to seek it out.

If you are thinking about confirmation, or simply wish to ask what seem like complicated or crazy questions about God (and "all that stuff"), then here I am. I would welcome the chance to hear your questions. I will not promise nor even pretend to suggest I can answer them. But asking questions is where discipleship begins. God might be calling you for confirmation. Who knows?

From Bishop Michael

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What an opportunity!

By Bishop Ruth



This week I was on a Zoom chat with some of our chaplains around the diocese. I meet regularly with eight or nine of them alongside our Chaplaincy Development Adviser Mike Haslam. These are only a few of the more than 300 chaplains we have, of all ages, lay and ordained, across Bath and Wells.

There are more and more enquiries about chaplaincy from a wide range of communities. They are seeking a chaplain to offer pastoral care and well-being support for an increasingly stressed and anxious workforce. One particular enquiry caught my attention this week.

A local Further Education college has been saying that their first concern is for a chaplain to address the spiritual exploration of its students. What an opportunity! We know from the Talking Jesus research (2015 and 2022) that most practising Christians come to faith before the age of 18. Several of our schools, including primary, have pupil chaplains now and this is a great way of recognising that you are never too young to start in living and telling the story of Jesus!

As a child I was always struck by the Old Testament story of the unnamed little slave girl who served Naaman's wife, (2 Kings chapter 5). Taken from her home to another country, and placed in an alien environment, she was the one who introduced Naaman to Elisha the prophet in Israel. As a result, Naaman overcame his scepticism, was healed from his leprosy, and discovered a faith in God.

Chaplaincy opens up a diversity of contexts in which we can share our faith and I invite you to pray for those here in Bath and Wells who are treading new ground to open up the way for others to discover the love of Jesus for themselves. However, each one of us has our own possibility of being a chaplain, coming alongside another in our daily life and community. Sometimes our timidity prevents us from speaking up about faith and our personal spiritual journey other than in church where we are known and on familiar territory. How about taking some time to reflect on where you might live and tell the story of Jesus outside of church, in your everyday context? Is there someone, like a Naaman's wife who is desperate to find help and hope for a loved one but doesn't know where to find it? Maybe you are the only one who could tell them!

With love and thankfulness for you all!

Martin's Musings

By Revd Martin Mudie

An occasional contribution from the garden of many delights…



October is one of my favourite months of the year. Not only is it OUR BIRTHDAY, (no, I am not suffering from delusions of grandeur – for Annie and I were both born on 5th October) but it is the time for harvest celebrations. Not only do we sing the old favourite harvest hymns but there are no less than four harvest suppers for myself and the girls to enjoy (shades of the Vicar of Dibley). Luckily they are all on different days and are all very different but equally enjoyable.

Since pagan times people have celebrated the gathering in of the crops that would see them through winter but the Harvest Festival that we enjoy today only dates back to 1842, when a Cornish vicar, The Revd. Robert Hawker, invited his flock at Morwenstow to celebrate and give thanks for the harvest in church. Some years later, in 1862, a delightfully killjoy vicar, Dr William Beale, in Norfolk did the same because he was appalled by the drunken scenes which ended harvesting in his village, thinking that people would have to BEHAVE in church where he could keep an eye on his erring flock.

It was the same reasoning which brought an end to the west gallery music bands and singers in church who were replaced by organs and a robed choir. This was because the bands got so drunk on Saturday night, they were often still inebriated on Sunday morning and the good vicars weren't having that in their churches.

Today, in these more salubrious times, when, even in the countryside, we are often separated from the way our food is produced, I think it is a good thing that we celebrate not only the hard work and diligence of our farmers, but also give thanks for all the blessings that we have in life. In a world where so many people, even in our own country, go without, we should never take our blessings for granted and whether we choose to give thanks to God or not, we should all be grateful for all the good things which we have in life and remember those less fortunate than ourselves.



The only thing which mystifies me each year is this. Why do people insist on growing so many marrows only to give them away at harvest time to people who don't want them? Answers on a post card please.

Burrowbridge





Doing Battle in Burrowbridge, 17th October at 7pm:

NB! Change of date

The history of Athelney area is shaped very much by conflict and power struggles. As we all know, King Alfred set up his camp here in the ninth century, eventually leading to him challenging the Danes at Eddington (now in Wiltshire), and founding what is now the British monarchy. Burrow Mump was his look out point whilst he (didn't) burned the cakes. Fast forward eight centuries and once again the area was embroiled in the conflicts of the civll war and afterwards.

If you are interested in finding out more about how and why this part of the world has been such a part of history, then come along to an evening of interactive local history in Burrowbridge Church.

Paul will be sharing his understanding of periods of history aro8und 878, 1645 and 1685 and will accompany his talk with photos, maps and models. All welcome!



There will be a buffet supper. All donations towards the upkeep of St Michael's Church!

Parking available in the King Alfred Inn (thank you to Lisa, Phil and Brian!)

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Coffee, Cakes and So Much More in Burrowbridge

By our Special Correspondent

The first Saturday every month is a very busy time for our correspondent, for there are two events in my increasingly busy days. The first is the monthly produce market at North Curry where the coffee and bacon butties are well worth a visit and then, having enjoyed all the market has to offer – I can personally recommend the honey – my faithful canine companions and I head towards Burrowbridge where the wonderful folk at St. Michael's Church put on their monthly coffee morning between 10.00 – 12.00. The driving force behind this delightful event are Julie and Sue who, each and every month, excel themselves in the wonderful spread on the table at the back of the church. A wonderful selection of homemade cakes, biscuits and those delightful mini sausage rolls await the eager punters. Judging by the ever-increasing numbers, word is getting around that this is definitely worth turning out for and as well as the food and drink, it is a really good opportunity to catch up with friends and family. I never miss it!

But what, I hear you ask, are the culinary opportunities for the rest of the month. Personally, I can heartily recommend the King Alfred Pub, next door to the church. Although teetotal, I tend to think of this as 'my local' and a very nice local it is too. I started visiting many years ago for one main reason – they are dog friendly. Where my canine friends are welcome, so am I. On entering this simple but beautiful country pub, you always receive a very warm welcome from Lisa and her staff. For me , it is a home from home. There is a very varied and good menu, prepared by Phil, Lisa's gifted husband, in the kitchen and I always find something to tempt me from the menu, where much of the ingredients are locally sourced. From time to time, the cuisine goes continental with themed weeks – I particularly enjoyed the Italian week. The food is delicious and, I think, very reasonably priced. The pub, along with the village hall and the church, is at the heart of the village. Proof of this was given in 2014 at the time of the awful floods, when it acted a warm and welcome base for the many volunteers who came from near and far the help in the community. More recently, last Christmas, the King Alfred opened its doors to carol singers from the churchyard in need of warmth and sustenance. So, if you haven't given it a try, I would encourage you to do so. I'm sure you won't be disappointed.



Two vital elements of a village: pub and church

Lyng



Lyng Parish Council

The Parish Council meets every 2 months, usually on a Thursday evening, at Lyng Village Hall. Members of the public are always welcome to attend.

Some of the issues discussed at the last meeting on Thursday 27th July included:

The **Airband presentation:** it is hoped that the presentation can be rescheduled for the next parish council meeting on Thursday 21st September, subject to the Community Liaison Officer's availability.

There is a councillor vacancy on Lyng Parish Council which serves East Lyng, West Lyng and Outwood. Please email the Clerk, Helen Barrington, at lyngpc1@outlook.com to register your interest.

Damaged fingerpost at Outwood junction: the Clerk reported that the Fingerpost Restoration Project provides help and advice for communities who wish to preserve and maintain the fingerposts in their parish. There is no funding available through this project so funding would need to be sourced through grants. Before committing to the maintenance of the fingerposts at Outwood Junction and Cuts Road, it was agreed that the Clerk should apply for the e-Survey App so that the location, type and condition of the fingerposts can be recorded.

The damaged parish noticeboard at Outwood is being repaired.

Village Transport Plan: the site meeting with Traffic Management took place on 25th July and we expect to receive a detailed proposal in the next few weeks.

The possible purchase of an LED screen, projector and hearing loop system for the village hall was discussed. This system would bring significant benefits to the whole community and could be funded through grants or fund raising. Details will be uploaded to the website lyngparish.square.site to give the parish a chance to comment.

All Souls and All Saints: Across the Benefice

The will be a selection of ways to remember those we have lost this year at our All Souls and All Saints worship this year. All Souls falls on 2nd November and the 7pm Eucharist at North Curry will be when we read the names of all those who has died the past year in the whole benefice. The same names for each parish will also be read out at the various All Saints services in the parishes. Please look out for more information on the weekly bulletin

Rotas at Lyng Church

If anyone would like to join the Lyng rotas (details inside back page) please contact Alison harveyfudge@icloud.com or 07470 838707.

The more the merrier!

Flowers are just two small brass vases on the altar and the small container on the war memorial.

Worship at Lyng

There are two services each month in Lyng, the first and the third Sundays. Since the end of lock-down both of these have been Eucharists (that's "bread and wine" in case you're wondering). Everyone is of course welcome all services at church, but we know a bit of variety can be very important when it comes to celebrating our faith.

Therefore, from October the third Sunday will be changing slighty. It will not be a Eucharist but a less formal "Service of the Word". Whilst formality is reduced, the opportunity to give thanks for our world remains: I do hope you can join in.

A message from North Curry School

All the staff, children and parents are looking forward to another successful year in the life of North Curry School.

We continue to celebrate our school's vision and values, focus on our key themes and strengthen our understanding of Spirituality. Let's together make North Curry an amazing place to be!



North Curry



North Curry Coffee Shop



We continue to be very busy serving our weekly lunch specials which range from homemade quiche to pork pie and salad for just £5. A range of homemade bakes are also on offer or maybe a cheese scone and chutney or a cream tea may take your fancy! Local arts, crafts, cards and jewellery stocks are refreshed every 6-8 weeks so keep an eye out for our new displays. Our opening hours are Tuesday-Sunday 10am-5pm. If you would like to join our friendly team of volunteers please leave a message for Alison Stone on 01823 491414 or coffeeshop@northcurry.com, the hours you work go towards a donation to your chosen charity. We look forward to welcoming you.

White Street News from North Curry Sport

200 Club: Congratulations to these winners of the March draw: Cricket Club member, D Alford, and J Boddy

Big Bash

Thank you to everyone who came out to the Big Bash. It was very popular and everyone seemed to enjoy the event. At time of writing, the numbers are not in yet but it appears we have achieved our fund-raising target while providing a fantastic event for the parish.

200 CLUB

200 Club winners

Sunday 2nd July

1st David Birch , 2nd Tina Stodgell , 3rd Pat Lander

Sunday 6th August

1st Paul Scott, 2nd Helen Smith, 3rd Mike Baker

The 200 Club still has room for one more! Players must be 18yrs+ to join. Only £18 per year (£1.50/month)

Prizes each month £30/ £20/ £10, plus a special Christmas bonus draw of £60. Proceeds for churchyard maintenance

To sign up, contact Sue Bethune on 01823 490179. Cheque payments to North Curry PCC, Standing Order/ BACS payments to North Curry PCC,
Account No: 00514650,
Sort Code: 30-98-45

Apple Day Plus, 14th October at the Cricket Pavilion, White Street, 2pm to 4pm



A date for your diaries and an occasion for the whole family, not to be missed. Do come and join the North Curry Environment Group, listen to music and sing 'appley' songs; play games; learn how to press apples and make lovely tasty apple juice - bring your own apples if you have some; enjoy a walk in the Community Woodland and identify some of its many native trees ; learn about wildlife in orchards; the history and care of orchards in our parish; and learn how solar panels can help reduce our energy costs and lessen our impact on the environment. Refreshments will be available.



An afternoon for all to enjoy and learn, see you there 2 pm to 4 pm.

North Curry Ecumenical Prayer Time: All Welcome!

"It helps me get my thoughts in order, look back on what's happened and look ahead", "I am pleased to get to know people in the village who go to other churches", "I have come away encouraged – it is helping my faith to grow", "I find it refreshing to be with others who want to pray"

We meet on the 4th Saturday of the month at 9.30 in the morning to pray together for North Curry. We follow a simple pattern of giving thanks for God's goodness, reflecting on our own lives and then praying for the village. Our longing is that God's love will be known more and more and we pray for God's blessing in many different areas of life.



None of us are 'prayer experts' some share words of prayer aloud, some like to pray silently, we believe God hears what is in our hearts and everyone who comes along is a great encouragement. See church notices for venues.

Open Day in the North Curry Bell Tower

Saturday 28th October, 1pm to 4 pm

The North Curry Bellringers would like to invite you to come and visit the Bell Tower

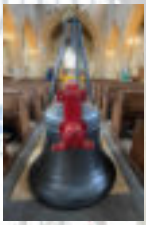
See our amazing new bells in action

Hear them ringing as you've never heard them before

You can even have a go at ringing them yourself

For those who can't manage the stairs up to the ringing chamber, there will be a screen in the church so you can still see the bells above

Open to all and especially to those who generously donated to the Appeal of Bells



A perfect picnic spot at Barrington Court, Wednesday 18th October

NORTH CURRY SOCIETY

Less well-known perhaps than Montacute House, Barrington Court is an atmospheric fragment of old Somerset located but a few miles from North Curry. Our speaker Peter Clark is an official National Trust guide and will be taking us on an illustrated tour of the 16th Century Manor House and its estate.

With free tea and coffee from 7.30pm the talk will start at 8.00. Both members (Annual Subscription £15) and guests (your £5 entrance fee will be credited to you if you decide to join) will receive a warm welcome.

The Society meets in the Village Hall on the third Wednesday of each month to hear talks and presentations on the environment and heritage of the village and its surrounds.

Colin Trim, Chairman





Iris in North Curry…

Two lovely sketches from Rosalind Hardwick and a delightful photo of the Lucy and Keziah… a very engaging evening of harp and violin





NORTH CURRY PARISH COUNCIL



Autumn Litter Pick

The Autumn litter pick will be taking place on Sunday 21st October, meeting at the Village Hall at 10am. Yellow jackets, litter pickers, and bin bags are all provided. Please wear sensible shoes and bring a coat just in case. You can stay as long as you want, but it won't be any longer than 2 hours. We hope to see lots of you coming along to help keep our Parish clean and tidy, and getting your warm civic glow on.

Tug of War 2024

North Curry Parish has been invited to take part in reigniting the old tradition of Tug of War between North Curry, Creech, West Monkton, and Ruishton. It is hoped that there will be a Hog Roast and other entertainment. It will likely be around June 2024 and may be over the River Tone, but location is still to be confirmed. We would need to form a North Curry Team, and have some volunteers to help organise the event between the four parishes. Please contact the Clerk if you are interested- it sounds like it could be a great day!

Remembrance Day

The annual Service of Remembrance will be held in Queen Square on Sunday 11th November 2023, gathering at 10:40am. Residents of Church Road and Queen Square are requested to kindly ensure that any vehicles are clear of the War Memorial area from 10:15am to 11:30am on the day. We look forward to seeing you all there.

The Parish Council Office opening hours are:

Wednesdays 10:00am – 1:00pm
Thursdays 1:00pm – 4:00pm

Contavct us: 01823 490136 or parishcouncil@northcurry.com

Parish Council Diary for October 2023

See the Parish noticeboard, our Website and Facebook.

Our Parish Council Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month, plus just for any extra planning meetings needed the last Wednesday of the month, both in the Meeting Room of our Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Stoke St Gregory



An exciting beginning at Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary

It has been a pleasure welcoming the children back to school after the summer holiday. I cannot recall weather hitting 28 degrees Celsius to start many school years though!

The beginning of a new academic year is always a time filled with hope, joy and excitement. This year, we look forward to formally joining The Oak Partnership (TOP). The Oak Partnership was established on in 2019 with a clear purpose of being an inclusive community of schools which inspires a passion for knowledge and the courage and confidence to fly. Currently, the partnership comprises of seven settings: two nurseries, 3 primary schools and a primary and secondary special school. TOP have been supporting the school since November 2022 and it is with excitement that we anticipate joining the partnership formally in November 2023.



The beginning of a school year is also the perfect time to launch new ways of working. The school vision "Let Your Light Shine' has been in place for a few years but we are proudly launching new values for the school following a consultation with staff, pupils and parents in the summer. Values are crucial for a school in order to influence the culture/ ethos of a school. Our new values are: Love, Imagination, Gratitude, Hope and Togetherness.

As well as using our values to nurture fantastic individuals, we also work hard in school to promote learning behaviours which children can take with them into secondary school and the workplace. We call this our Stoke Code. Our Stoke Code has also been updated this September and now states:



"We try hard to:

- Listen and respond well.
- Understand and include others
- Be brave and learn from our mistakes
- Ask for help when needed
- Take pride in our work
- Work hard and keep trying
- Show self-control"



We are also proud to report on a 'new beginning' for a disused area of the school. We now have a new fence and access gates to a new outdoor learning area for our Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. You can see they are already getting great use from the area. The area is accessed via the original front door (1857) the school which has been out use for a number of years.

We look forward to welcoming prospective new starters to the school on our Open Mornings.

OPEN DAYS

Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th November 9.15am and 2.00pm
Please book a place via the school office: office@sstgs.co.uk

Harvest Supper

Sadly, owing to an outbreak of Covid in the village, and with many of the congregation and their families affected, we decided to cancel the harvest supper this year. It was a great shame, but wise in the circumstances: an evening spent with 40 people in the church room would have been a very effective breeding ground for the virus!

Thank you to all who were preparing to cook for the event. With luck we will find a time to gather and share supper at some point in the not to distant future… watch this space…



Harvest Festival Flowers

Thank you to Amelia and her band of helpers for the lovely display in church for the Harvest Festival on 1st October.

The apples have since been donated to the Bridgwater food bank, as have two trolley loads of gifts from the school: thank you!

The Local Hero of Rorke's Drift

By Dave Evans

Did you see Stanley Baker, Michael Caine, Richard Burton and Jack Hawkins in the 1964 film Zulu? The Battle of Rorke's Drift, 1879, happened during the Anglo-Zulu War. Britain had invaded Zululand because the Zulu nation wouldn't supply labour for the British mines. The number of troops on each side were about equal but the British had the cannons, the breech-loading rifles and the Gatling guns. The Zulus were defending an unprovoked attack on their territory by an invader with superior weaponry, but the press claimed underdog status for the British in this one battle, when 150 British soldiers held off 4,000 Zulu warriors. That gave us the hero, John Rouse Merriott Chard VC, played by Stanley Baker. And he had very local connections (Chard not Baker).

Shortly after Chard's ship berthed in Portsmouth, the Commander-in Chief, H.R.H.The Duke of Cambridge, arrived to greet him, with Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar. A telegram from H.M.Queen Victoria was delivered to Major Chard, welcoming him home and asking him to visit her at Balmoral. But before that he had many other engagements. The Taunton Courier & Western Advertiser takes up the story:

"RETURN OF MAJOR CHARD. On Friday Major J. R. M. Chard, the "hero of Rorke's Drift," arrived at Taunton on the express from Paddington. Major Chard landed at Portsmouth on Thursday from the troopship Egypt, and in company with his brother-in-law, Major Barrett, North Curry, he proceeded at once to London, where he reported himself at the War Office. As soon as it was known that the gallant officer would pass through Taunton a special meeting of the Town Council was convened, and it was resolved that the Mayor and Corporation should present an address of welcome to the distinguished visitor on behalf of the inhabitants of the borough. On the platform was the gallant major's sister, Mrs Barrett, and other members of the family. Hearty cheers burst forth and continued while the illustrious vis-



itor greeted in the most affectionate manner his most intimate relations; again three cheers were given, and then a way was made to the carriage in waiting to convey the visitor Moredon. Between Taunton and North Curry the gallant hero of the day was frequently greeted with signs of welcome. At Blackbrook a party was assembled and several bouquets were thrown into the carriage. At the foot of Mattocks-tree hill a simple arch of evergreens and flags was extended across the road, and a little crowd of country folks gave a hearty cheer as the carriage passed. The school children at Thorne were also waiting to cheer the hero; and so on from point to point of the journey. At Burrow-post the crossways to Knapp and Wrantage, the scene became animated; some thousands of people had assembled including two or three score of Horsemen. and the occupants of many carriages. Across the road floated lines of streamers, and a well-made arch bore the inscription 'Welcome to North Curry.' The band struck the air 'See the conquering hero comes,' and rounds of cheers arose on all sides. As soon as silence was partially obtained the Rev, R. C. L. Browne, vicar of the parish who was well mounted, came forward and read an elaborately prepared address of welcome which evoked still more cheers."

Among the numerous messages of sympathy and floral tributes at Chard's funeral was a wreath of laurel leaves sent by the Queen, who had remained in contact with Chard and frequently enquired about his health. The wreath bore the handwritten inscription "A mark of admiration and regard for a brave soldier from his sovereign".

Postscript: In May of this year it was reported that Zulu, along with Four Feathers, The Great Escape & Dam Busters, has been named as films that could 'encourage far-right sympathies' by the Research Information and Communications Unit, run as part of Prevent, the government's counter-terror operation.

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theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Notice to all residents of Stoke St Gregory that the WI are having an Open Meeting on Tuesday 10th October at 7pm in the Village Hall.

This means all are welcome, both women and men, to hear a talk by our very own local historian Dave Evans on the 'History of Stoke St Gregory'. Entrance is £4 which also includes a free hot drink. Veronica Andrews and Barbara Parsons are the tea hostesses, Sue Dare is giving the vote of thanks and Judy Blair will be running the trade stall. This is an opportunity to see the workings of this friendly group but also to enjoy a fascinating talk about our Village.

Amelia Holt, President, 07985317252

Heart of the Village News

by Mike Blair, Chairman

Our staff and volunteers are doing a tremendous job coping with the demands of keeping the shop, café and pub on track despite the ever-present rising cost of living.

We have launched a monthly prize draw for all volunteers, in recognition of the contribution that they make to the successful running of the community shop and pub. All volunteers are eligible.

More volunteers are urgently needed to help to spread the load on the existing team of volunteers. We are a friendly team and enjoy being part of a village success story. If you think that you would like to join the team and maybe win a free meal in pub now and again, please ask in the shop or pub.

We have introduced a range of delicious hot savoury snacks from the café. The range includes pasties and sausage rolls. They are proving to be a fine accompaniment to your coffee or can be taken away.

With the Rugby World Cup competition running throughout September, we will be showing as many of the home team games as we can. As the competition develops, we will be flexible in our opening times to support the fixtures.

Our Annual Members meeting is to be held on September 25th 7pm in the Royal Oak function room.

The forthcoming season of events includes:

A Coffee, Cakes and Coffee morning for Macmillan cancer support of Friday 29th September 10.30 until 12noon. Come along and support this wonderful charity.

Christmas Fair Monday 4th December 6.00pm Stalls are still available but going quickly.

Other events yet to be confirmed are Quiz nights, Music nights, Skittles and possibly a Pool competition. When dates are confirmed for these events, they will be posted on the web site and notice boards.

If you are interested in helping, please pop into the Shop, Pub or contact@hotvssg.org or 07842992825 to find out more.

Contacts

General contact@hotvssg.org, Shop: shop@hotvssg.org Facebook search "Hotvshop", 07842992825

Pub: royaloakssg@gmail.com, Facebook search "Royal Oak Stoke St Gregory", 01823490602

Share forms are available from the shop or online at: stokestgregory.org

Infrastructure Challenges and Going Batty in Stoke

By Ian Upshall



In last month's report I was bemoaning the apparent end of the warm summer weather – and then we have a heat wave! It was great to see the sun again and enjoy all the outdoor opportunities open to us in this part of the world.

Unfortunately, other parts of the world have been struck by disaster – it seems almost a monthly occurrence that we hear about communities facing terrible hardships. Of course, some are natural disasters, such as the earthquakes we have seen in Sudan, Turkey, Greece and more recently, Morocco. Whilst there is nothing we can do to stop tectonic plates colliding, it would appear as though the outcomes have been exacerbated by poor building design and standards. Then, a few days ago, we witnessed scenes of destruction in Libya – again, poor design and infrastructure maintenance apparently were contributory factors to the heavy toll of death and destruction. A country in turmoil both politically and socially.

The cause of these disasters were not human induced but they were, arguably, made worse by our apparent lack of installing and maintaining our infrastructure in the light of known (if not expected) natural hazards. The same argument could be made about our ability to respond to a sustainable future. Most people, and governments, accept the climate is changing. Even if we consider the natural cycle of climate change (ignoring the human-induced component) we are not building and maintaining our infrastructure to a standard required to carry on with 'normal' life. It is amazing that so many houses are being built today without the inherent capacity to adapt to more rain, or higher temperatures. A few days before writing this article, parts of Somerset, Dorset and Devon had been hit by heavy rainstorms that closed roads, flooded houses and shops, halted trains and buses. These events bring with them a human cost. But we have had heavy rain in the past? What has changed such that one day of rain should cause such chaos?

The need to adapt to change can sometimes be difficult, challenging and expensive. But we must weigh up those considerations with the likely outcomes of doing nothing. No one could not have been moved by the elderly lady from Harberton in Devon who was distraught to hear the sound of water flooding through her house. These events are be-

coming far too common to be ignored and so we, as a caring and responsible society have to adapt our way of living and reappraise our priorities. It can sometimes feel that governments see climate change, and adapting to it, is more of a vote loser than a simple necessity – and that may be a strategy which, in itself, soon becomes unsustainable.

One of the ways we can combat climate change is to go out of our way to care for our environment – and that is what the volunteers in Stoke Environment Group are passionate about. How do we 'measure' the effects of climate change and other human activities on our environment? Simple, we look, listen, count and record. Citizen science is an important tool and something everyone can get involved with – at virtually no cost. Many organisations collect environmental data and use this to monitor change and, importantly, to direct limited resources and make a difference where it is really needed. Recently, SEG in close cooperation with Bryony at Somerset Wildlife Trust and Bindy from the Somerset Bat Group undertook at Bat count in our community. 28 people, in six groups, armed with hi-tech bat detecting equipment walked the lanes, wooded paths, rivers and fields with bat detector in hand. In total, over 100 bats and several species were detected! The results were 'beamed' back to 'Mission Control' at the village hall where, one by one, the results were flooding in. At the end of the evening, we could see what species were found, and where. The key information of species, location and abundance is now being analysed and will then be forwarded through the iNaturalist phone app to databases all over the world – including our very own local service run by Leon DeBell at the Somerset Environmental Records Centre. Thanks to all involved, this was a great, fun, and informative evening – science can be exciting for everyone!

SEG has recently taken over the management of a small orchard in the heart of the village and this will become a community area where free fruit picking is encouraged by one and all. We have recently undertaken some weeding and thinning on the hedge planted almost two years ago and some of our members are busy out and about checking footpaths and bridleways, clearing overgrown vegetation, checking access points, and improving signage. Helping people access the countryside will encourage them to appreciate what is important on our doorstep – to see the changes and to help not only preserve what we have here, but to positively improve it. Small steps to maintain our green infrastructure is important too!

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Our meals are cooked by volunteer cooks in their own kitchens and delivered by friendly local people.
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To learn more, whether as a potential customer or as a volunteer, please phone Carole Joll 01823 490077, or Vicki Fielding (490565) or Judy Blair (490222).



The Blue Sheet

theblueshee t@outlook.com



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Rotas

North Curry

	Sidespersons	Intercessors	Readers
1st Oct	Janet and Pam		Tom
8th Oct	Helen and Tom	Helen	Susan
15th Oct	Teresa	David W.	Zillah and Teresa
22nd Oct	Lorraine and Sally	David F.	Hannah
29th Oct	Pam and Janet	Jenny	Janet

Stoke St Gregory

	Sidespersons	Readers	Cleaners	Flowers
1st Oct	Sally & Alex	Will Tilley	Marilyn & Terri	Amelia
8th Oct			Annette & Martin	
15th Oct	Penny & Simon	Sally	Dave & Janet	Di Tilley
22nd Oct	Carolyn & Will	Annette	Penny & Simon	
29th Oct	United Eucharist at North Curry		Linda & Brent	

Please contact Amelia Holt if you are unable to undertake this duty. (01823 490401)





Services across the Benefice

8th October: Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.30am	Stoke St Gregory	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
10am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church starting with breakfast
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service

15th October: Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

8am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Service of the Word
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family service
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service
6pm	North Curry	Evensong

22nd October: Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family service
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service

29th October: Bible Sunday (5th Sunday)

10am	North Curry	United Benefice Service
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family service with communion
3pm	North Curry Methodists	Favourite Hymn Service

2nd November: All Souls' Day

7pm	North Curry (Benefice)	All Souls' Service

5th November: All Souls'/All Saints' Sunday

8am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Commemoration Service
10am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church starting with breakfast
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Commemoration Service
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service
3pm	Lyng	Commemoration Service
4.30pm	Burrowbridge	Commemoration Service

Morning Prayer (The Daily Office) is said each day at 9am in the following parishes:

Tue: Stoke St Gregory, Wed: Burrowbridge, Thu: Lyng, Fri: North Curry. The prayer time last around 20 minutes and is a peaceful and enriching start to the day. All are welcome. You simply need to turn up.