The Athelney Magazine



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

February 2024

Who's Who

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

Benefice		
Vicar	Revd Dr Simon Bale	07970 936325, 01823 491587, vicar@athelneybenefice.com
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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, athelneybenefice.com/signup



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.

You can find the coffee mornings here:

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



Lyng

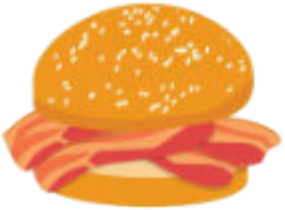
Lyng Coffee mornings are held monthly on the final Saturday of the month, 10am you

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 February** for the March 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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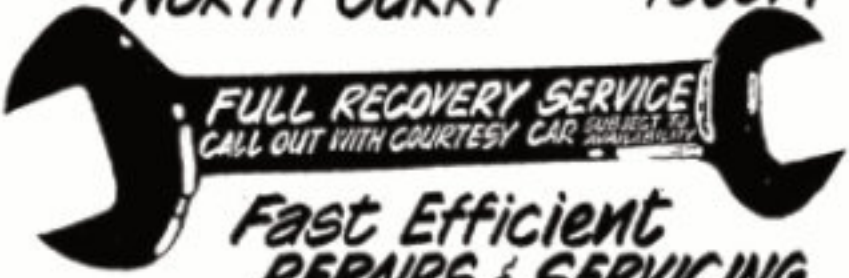


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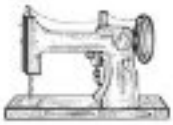
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The Athelney Benefice



Love wins

By Revd Dr Simon Bale, Vicar of The Athelney Benefice

Perhaps you noticed towards the end of last year a little flurry from the Church of England's General Synod regarding same-sex prayers and what The Church thinks about it all. Perhaps. Perhaps not. perhaps it passed you by with hardly a scintilla of a flash of a thought. If so, and if you are are not especially concerned about this subject, then please do not linger here. I write what I write now simply to clarify and signal how things are in the benefice regarding this – for some – sensitive matter.

Still here…? … OK, I'll continue.

The matter of same-sex relationships in general has been a huge issue in The Church for a long time. There always seems to be something in The Church that causes controversy, whether it is the very basis of the Eucharist or Mass or the issues that led to the reformation in Europe in the 16th Century, the reformists of the 17th, the emergence of Methodism in the 18th, the Oxford Movement in the 19th… (and many many more challenges to the smooth running of The Church that are in amongst these headliners). Controversy, difference, conflict and dogma haunt the worship of God and the thanksgiving for the forgiveness and redemption we all receive through Christ.

In my own lifetime there have been debates about Sunday opening, women priests and most latterly women bishops. Should we or shouldn't we? Can we or can't we? What does the Bible say on this matter? Indeed, does the Bible say anything on this matter? It can seem as though The Church wishes only divide and disunite. I am saddened by this, and it needn't be so. This morning we celebrated the renewal of the Methodist Covenant in North Curry, an ecumenical service that was joyful and positive and brought together denominations as a matter of course. There was no question that Anglicans and Methodists might worship together. It simply isn't an issue any longer.

So, with this in mind, I tentatively raise the matter of whether or not it is acceptable to offer prayers in a normal time of worship to give thanks for the love of two people no matter what their sex. As I see it, that is all that this is all about. Love.

Last year the House of Bishops produced – and Synod debated – a set of "Prayers of Love and Faith"that are proposed to be acceptable to be said during worship regarding a couple who wish for their civil marriage

to be noticed in the church. Shortly before Christmas our own Bishop Michael shared his desire that it is entirely up to individual parishes whether or not these prayers should be adopted for use in church services. He sets this out in a lengthy letter that makes it very clear what is and what is not being proposed.

What is NOT currently being proposed is that The Church should offer services for people of the same sex to marry in church. That is not at all on the agenda. Equally, there is nothing being suggested for couples of the same sex to receive a special, stand-alone blessing in a church following their civil marriage.

What IS being proposed is that the prayers offered are solely during a normal service and should give thanks for the loving relationship that two people have for each other.

This is huge! For a very long time, since homosexuality became legal in 1967, there has been no provision for such prayers to be offered. This is changing. It is not a straightforward matter, and is one that requires much prayer, reflection and understanding: not just by the clergy but by the congregations as a whole. To begin this process of discernment, last month the combined PCCs of the Benefice met and, although not every PCC member was able or desired to attend, those who did were very much of the a mind: the proposals for the House of Bishops all sounded perfectly reasonable and that if approached to offer a blessing in a normal service, then as your Vicar I should be free to do so. I think this is good news.

The most important feature of our relationship with God is God's love for us. From this love so much flows. Everything that is good and loving is of God. Love is the foundation of our faith and love is how we show the world that Jesus, being the way, the truth and the life (John 14) can guide us in our relationships with one another. To turn away the need for love is counter to God's desire for each of us. Over and above all our own concerns, Love wins, above and beyond which sex we are.

Currently I have not been approached by anyone to conduct such prayers. Were I to be, I would discuss the request with the PCC of the particular church. It is about a collective understanding, living alongside one another, aware of each other's views and expectations, but not riding over those who are challenged by such matters. Therefore, if you have anything you'd like to raise with me, please do. Although the PCCs have met, no decisions were made and they will not be for some time, and not until there has been prayer and consideration.

I offer these thoughts and words openly and as a servant of God and as your priest.

From Bishop Alastair

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By Alastair Redfern, Assistant Bishop for the Diocese of Bath and Wells

As Christians, while we may look to reduce our own carbon footprint, we are called to be stewards and witnesses of a much more radical resource. The clue is in the word 'ecology'.

'Eco' comes from the Greek word oikos, meaning house, or dwelling place. Ecology is partly about our responsibility to recognise the precious gift of the Earth, as our dwelling place: to be thankful, and play our part. God made humankind to care for the earthly world: Jesus amplifies the call, as He uses 'nature' as the sign of how we can live in order to flourish and to fulfil God's will.

'Logy' comes from a Greek word logos interpreted as reason, the ordering of knowledge, logic. In John's Gospel, logos is a word to describe Jesus – through whom all things are made and from whom all true knowledge comes. Logos is the word, the source of all goodness and grace, for every human life, and for all of creation.

It is the 'logos', the word, who inhabits our lives, our creation – inviting us to recognise His light, and allow it to overcome the darkness of our own limited concerns and agendas. We meet the logos in scripture, in worship, in prayer, and deeper reflection.

In Jesus, as logos, we can find the wisdom, the resources and the commitment to play our part in caring for creation. We are able to invite others to recognise the deeper truths about Eco, our common dwelling place, and to see more clearly how we join with others to work out what to do, how to live, and honour the gift of life that we receive through Him. The Logos is the possibility of good news for humankind and for the Earth.

What a responsibility each Christian disciple is called to bear! And what grace can be ours to enable us to fulfil our calling, and help all of God's children become caught up in the praise and prayer that gives true life to our dwelling place, and to exercise our stewardship appropriately.

Read John 1v1-14. Become an ECO-warrior – committed our common dwelling place – through celebrating the power and presence of the LOGOS. ECOLOGY: we know it makes sense.

Martin's Musings

There is an old saying, "Home is where the heart is". Now that can mean different things to different people. For those who have had or chosen to live in different places through their lives it can be where they happen to be at the time. For others it may be where they were born or grew up and, even if they move away, home remains the same. For dear Patrick Gage , who recently passed away, a special place for him was the small island of the coast of Northern Island, where he and his family spent magical summers and I loved hearing his stories of his childhood. For myself, although I was born in Kent, near Tunbridge Wells (and unlike the writer to the Times I have really tried to live my life without being disgusted), I never really felt at home in Kent.

This was partly because I spent a large part of my childhood at boarding school, where the meanies spent all their time – unsuccessfully – trying to get me fit. Games or runs every flipping afternoon except Sunday, which was not so much a day of rest but exhaustion, but because I never felt very much at home in a part of the world where their values were very different from mine. What was important to many there, being so close to London were things like – what was your profession – it was never just called a job – how big was your house – and did you have a flashy car.

My house was small, my car old and battered so, thankfully, I was never invited to dinner parties. However, all that changed in my mid-thirties, when I moved to theological college in Salisbury, where I lived in the Cathedral close, in two rooms with a lovely view of the cathedral. This gave me a chance to experience life away from the south east. So, when the opportunity came to move to Somerset some years later, I grabbed it with both hands. At last, I had found people and a way of life which suited me. Here, I find people are generally friendly and happy to pass the time of day – and this is particularly true of village life.

All my life I wanted to live in a village and four years ago I achieved my ambition by moving to Stoke St Gregory.
My home is a lovely little single-story cottage (bungalow to the uninformed), surrounded by a garden which is rapidly becoming a haven for wildlife and an easy drive to the coffee shop. In a word – bliss. I am also lucky to serve as a priest in four very different, but equally lovely parishes, surrounded by adoring parishioners (Oh go on- let me have at least one illusion!). In short, I have at last come home and I couldn't be happier.



Mary's Story

By Zillah Sykes



Like the Psalmist of old, we ascended the hill of the Lord, that steep and stony pathway that led up towards Jerusalem. I was sitting upon the donkey, holding Baby very close, while Joseph, my husband, walked beside us leading us onward, guiding us upward. The city walls towered above us, gleaming in the morning sunshine and like the pilgrims at Passover we rejoiced as we were about to enter the city of our God and the Temple, the place of His dwelling.

It was the 40th day since the birth of Jesus, my little One and the law of the Lord required us to consecrate Him to God's service and to make purification for me after childbirth. This would require the sacrifice of two turtledoves which we would purchase at the Temple.

Once through the city gate we made our way to the Temple and there we entered the courts of the Lord, where we stood and marvelled at the splendour and magnificence of the buildings. Then, to our surprise, we were greeted by a man of great age whose old face radiated with joy as he looked upon the Baby I was holding. I found myself placing this little One into his outstretched arms and with his old eyes shining, he looked up to Heaven and began to thank and praise God for Him. I knew then that he was a holy and devout man of God and later found out that his name was Simeon. I listened carefully to his words.

"Lord, you have fulfilled your promise to your servant; I can now die in peace for these eyes of mine have seen the Saviour. He is a Light to enlighten the nations and the glory of your people Israel."

Simeon then lowered his eyes and with awe and wonder gazed at the Baby in his arms before carefully giving him back to me. As Joseph and I marvelled at his words, this aged prophet raised his hands and blessed us, we who were already so blessed. He was about to take his leave of us when his countenance became greatly troubled. He spoke again and this time his tone was sombre. His words concerned my child, Jesus who, he said would cause the fall and rising of many in Israel and he would be a sign that would be spoken against. Then, directing his words to me, he said, "And a sword shall pierce your own soul, too." Troubling words indeed and I feared for my Son. I knew well the stories of the prophets and how they had suffered as they had served our God. As his mother I would doubtless share His pain. But, thanks be to God, at that very moment we were greeted by Anna the prophetess, a woman of great age whose old eyes shone as she looked upon the Babe in my

arms and joyfully she began to praise and thank God for Him. There were those in Israel, she assured us, who were faithfully awaiting the promised Messiah and she would be sure to tell them the good news of His arrival. As both Simeon and Anna left us,



I stood there for a moment considering all that had been said of this precious little One who was lying so peacefully in my arms. What would become of Him? I wondered. Then I felt Joseph's arm around my shoulders.

"Come, Mary," he said gently, "there's time enough to think on these things. We still have much to do here. Let us go, buy the doves and present this child Jesus to the priest, who will consecrate Him to the Lord and unto His service, whatever that may be."



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This year, it couldn't be more relevant

Candlemas Bells

By Zillah Sykes

The feast of Candlemas falls on 2nd February, the half-way point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox when our pre-Christian ancestors celebrated the festival of Imbolc, "the feast of lights." Fires were lit and torches blazed as they rejoiced in the strengthening of the life-giving sun and the lessening of winter's grip; the tilling of the earth and the sowing of the first seeds.

In the Christian calendar the "Feast of the Presentation" takes place also on 2nd February, forty days after Christmas. This marks the time when Mary and Joseph took the Baby Jesus to the Temple to present Him to the Lord, according to Jewish law. There they were met by Simeon, an aged priest who spoke of Jesus as being "a Light to the Gentiles." So the Advent custom of lighting candles in churches as a reminder that Jesus is the Light of the world continued to be celebrated at Candlemas. On that day candles were blessed both for use in the church and also for use at home. There a candle was lit and placed in the window, its bright flame a witness to Jesus' presence with them- a Light to dispel the darkness and to bring them comfort as well as being a guiding light for the way ahead.

Snowdrops (also known as Candlemas Bells) are among the earliest of our spring flowers and make a welcome appearance in our churchyard, emerging from the cold earth during the first days of January. These delicate, pure white bell- shaped flowers hang from their stems and move gently in the breeze, but despite their fragile appearance these little flowers are very hardy indeed. They are able to endure the bitterest of wintry weather and continue to bloom, undaunted by frost and undamaged by falls of snow. At a time when winter feels at its bleakest they become a symbol of hope, reminding us that spring is on its way.

In pre-Reformation times snowdrops were gathered from the churchyard and with the lighted candles were placed on the altar reminding us of the purity and humility of Mary and symbolising the Christ Child, the Hope of the world. And so, both flame and flower helped to keep faith alive in the cold days of February.



Burrowbridge



Stations of the Cross

In memory of her mother, Dorothy Tottle, who died in 2022, Julie Pocock, warden at Burrowbridge, has arranged for a series of "The Stations" to be installed at St Michael's Church. Thank you to Julie and her family for their wonderful gift. If you are wondering… "Stations of the Cross", read on…

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion at Passiontide for many centuries because they enable us to engage actively with the path of suffering walked by Jesus.

They originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem and wanted to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points. Eventually those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since then Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

In the late fourteenth century the Franciscans were given the responsibility for the holy places of Jerusalem and they erected tableaux to aid the devotion of the visitors. These kinds of images are now commonplace inside churches, and occasionally outside them.

The number of stations has varied immensely through the centuries from as few as five to as many as thirty-six, but the now traditional number of fourteen was established by Clement XII in 1731—nine scriptural stations and a further five based on popular devotion. However, owing to the increasing ecumenical popularity of this devotion there have been attempts to create a wholly scriptural set on which to focus.

The stations may be used as a focus for personal prayer or as part of a liturgical celebration. In this latter context they have been used either as a whole service in themselves, or a few of the stations have been used in the context of a larger liturgical celebration



Monthly Market at the Coronation Hall

The second Saturday of every month, 10.30am to 12.30pm.

West Yeo Road, TA7 0RH

A time to gather and chat and to buy locally sourced food, goods and other produce.

Tea, coffee and breakfast rolls also available

Lyng





Altar Frontals

We are so very grateful to Lesley Dyson for making new altar frontals for the altar at St Bartholomew's. As you may be aware, each season in the church has its own "liturgical colour". Christmas and Easter are white, Lent and Advent, purple, Pentecost is red and "ordinary time" is green. Some of the frontals have become in need of repair and some are entirely new: all down to Lesley. Thank you!

Rotas at Lyng Church

If anyone would like to join the Lyng rotas 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.

Thank you to everyone who helps with all this already!



Cleaning Rota

5th February: R Barrington & D James
12th & 19th Feb: A Martin & Jennie
26th Feb & 5th March: S Dare & J Barnstable

Flowers at Lyng

3rd & 10th February	A Perry
16th & 23rd February	A Martin
1st & 9th March	C Dawson



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

200 Club

Congratulation to these winners: Youth Football Club (2) and K Sutton.

Big Bash 2024

Please let us know what you think of the Big Bash (our main fund-raising event) and any suggestions you may have. Just drop a note to: whitestreet@northcurry.com

200 Club winners

December

1st Michael Spearpoint
2nd Malcolm Tennant
3rd David Hincks

January

1st Sue Cable
2nd Carole McFadyean
3rd Jean Cunnell

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

NORTH CURRY SOCIETY

George Marston as told by Stephen Locke

Wednesday 21st February

At our February meeting, Stephen Locke will be exploring the life and accomplishments of George Marston – Antarctic explorer and official artist on Shackleton's expeditions. With his initial training in fine arts afterwards Marston became handicrafts adviser, and subsequently director, at the Rural Industries Bureau. He came to an untimely end, dying in office in 1940, and is buried in Lyng churchyard.

Marston's biographer Stephen Locke retired to North Curry after a career in The Hampshire Museum Service, and you may remember gave a much-appreciated talk to the North Curry Society in 2022 on 'Somerset Fossils and Fossilists'.



George Edward Marston grave monument (www.gravestonephotos.com

The North Curry Society meets in North Curry Village Hall, generally on the third Wednesday of each month to hear talks and presentations on the environment and heritage of the village and its surrounds and the wonderful people who live and have lived nearby. With refreshments from 7.30pm, talks start each evening at 8pm. Both members (Annual Subscription £15) and guests (your £5 entrance fee will be credited to you if you decide to join) are assured of a warm welcome. (Colin Trim: Chairman)



In support of the North Curry Music Festival

Saturday 2nd March 2024, 7pm for 7.30pm, Village Hall

The popular Quiz Master Martin Baldock will be back to test us all. Most Team spaces have already been allocated, but if you're really keen, give Jenny Satchwell a call on 01823 490463. There will be a buffet supper, but please bring your own drinks and glasses. Also: a tombola!

North Curry Prayer Fellowship: 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 usually 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. Next gathering: 24th February

North Curry & District Amateur Gardeners

Greg Morter: "From Seed to Fork", 2nd February, 8pm, Village Hall

A talk in two parts. First Greg explores the 450 million year evolution of plants and the inventive ways they've solved the problems arising from the move onto dry land. Then the focus shifts to how humans have adapted this bountiful heritage - how, why and where agriculture was invented. The talk should provide a new perspective on the plants that we grow in our gardens. Our March meeting is on Friday 1st March, when Richard Horswood will talk on "Alpines in Troughs", a talk postponed from last year. Growing alpines in troughs, other containers and under cover, including successes and failures.

We are enthusiastic gardeners from North Curry and the surrounding areas. From September to May, on the first Friday evening of the month we meet at 7.45pm in North Curry Village Hall, when speakers entertain us on a variety of gardening and related topics. Many bring plants to sell. Coffee, tea, biscuits and a chat round off the evening. In the summer months we visit gardens near and far, either by coach to the furthest or by car to those nearer. Sociable, fun, knowledgeable. Something for everyone with an interest in gardening and plants. Why not join us? New members and visitors always welcome. Membership £12.00 p.a. Visitors £3.00 per visit. Need more info? Phone Sue on 01823 491658 or email, northcurrygardeningclub@gmail.com





SAX-22

Four saxophones plus electric bass playing a wide variety of styles - something for everyone!

16 MARCH 2024
7.30PM

NORTH CURRY PARISH CHURCH

Tickets available from North Curry Post Office

Music (and more) at North Curry Parish Church 2024

North Curry is a very musical village, with local performers and loyal supporters, and distinguished offspring who have made their way in the world of music.



It's a great pleasure to be looking forward to another year of performance at the parish church. On **Saturday 16th March**, we have Sax-22's fundraising concert in aid of the 2024 Music Festival. The group are five talented musicians (four saxophones and a bass guitar) who live in Somerset or adjacent counties and who play a wide variety of music from Bach to Blues, Jazz Standards to Ragtime, as well as contemporary items.

The following **Friday 22nd March** Max Calaf does his funny, personable, dramatic and energetic (though not musical) trampolining act for an hour on the dais beneath the belltower.

The Village Choir's Spring Concert on **Saturday 20th April** led by Miles Quick, music director at Taunton Minster, will include Fauré's Requiem in full, a taste of which we were given at the Christmas Concert, as well as Haydn's furious Insanæ et vanæ curæ, SS Wesley's rather more tranquil Ascribe unto the Lord, and possibly a rather nice ocean-going piece by Sumsion.

Those prepared to venture a little further afield will be regaled at the Taunton Choral Society Spring Concert, **Saturday 27th April** led by Edward Goater and including singers from North Curry and hereabouts, with Joseph Haydn's D minor "Nelson" Mass - so-called because of an early performance for Horatio and Emma while guests of Prince Esterházy (an extra snippet for NC Society folk). The same concert will feature the Evensong canticle Magnificat in a setting in D by JS Bach, possibly also Joseph's younger brother Michael Haydn with his Morning canticle Te Deum dedicated to the Emperor Napoleon.

Tickets for the March events are already available at the village Post Office.

Following the huge success of the first **North Curry Music Festival**, there will be another musical bonanza over the weekend of **14th to 16th June** at various venues across the village, including Greenway playing field pavilion, village hall, Queen Square garden and the parish church. Acts have been booked, others are in preparation, concluding with a Festival

Evensong led by In Ecclesia.

Ed Goater will be bringing Taunton Military Wives Choir back on **Saturday 12th October** with songs and reminiscences of life for women in the Forces, and In Ecclesia lead Evensong again on **Sunday 17th November**. Village Choir will no doubt have a 2024 Christmas Concert in December, but that's enough to be going on with for now.

Happy listening!

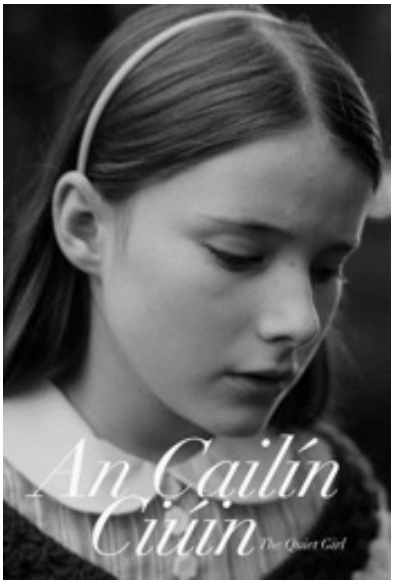
NORTH CURRY F I L M CLUB



We have a treat for you on Saturday Feb 3rd as we are showing Safety Last! - a Harold Lloyd film made over 100 years ago. It is an absolute hoot and amazing given he did his own stunts, for real.

The Village Hall opens at 2.30pm with the film starting at 3pm. Entry £5. We also have intermission for tea & cake (donation requested).

Later in the month, on Feb 28th, we have a very contrasting film: The Quiet Girl. This is a beautiful film and is in Gaelic (with subtitles). It is set in rural Ireland in 1981, when a quiet, neglected girl is sent away from her dysfunctional family to live with foster parents for the summer. She blossoms in their care, but in this house where there are meant to be no secrets, she discovers one.



Doors & bar open at 7pm, with the film starting at 7.30pm. Also open to non-members (£5).

Please see our website for trailers: www.northcurryfilmclub.org.uk or use the QR code.

We also have a Facebook page (follow the QR code)

Anyday



with
Max Calaf Sevé

A circus show like no other and a day in a life like no other! Max lives on a trampoline, with only his little pet bird for company. Every day his life is the same, but Max decides he wants a change, so they embark together on an adventure.

Follow the two friends in their funny, bouncing daily routine, with breathtaking trampoline skills and hilarious clowning, in a brilliant and unique new show for all the family.

Set to an original score by Matt Huxley, Anyday is a charming tale that transmutes the clangs and boings of unbearable hope to make our spirits soar.

Friday 22nd March

6.30pm North Curry parish church (doors open at 6pm). Tickets available from the Post Office £15, students £10, accompanied under-12s free. Ticket includes a welcome drink

From North Curry Methodist Church

From Revd Deborak Kirk



Services during Advent and Christmas highlighted the United Christingle Service at the beginning of December with around 40 people from the village attending. Rev Simon accompanied the singing with his guitar, Ildiko and her family led a sketch which focussed on sharing what we have, and culminated the message of sharing the Light of Christ.

We all had individual bags containing what we needed to make our own Christingle, as Rev Deborah led us through what each part of the Christingle represented.

We are grateful to the stores in Taunton who donated oranges for this, and other Christingle services around the Methodist Circuit.

A Taize service led by Rev Deborah was a welcome, and quiet reflective space in the busy run-up to Christmas, and Ildiko led the well-attended Carol Service at the Methodist Church with favourite carols and traditional readings taking us through the Nativity story. Grateful thanks to Sarah who stepped in at the last minute to play for us.

As January progresses, we are looking forward to the Covenant renewal service which will be shared with our friends at St Peter's and St Paul's – a recommitment to our individual discipleship, as well as our relationship with one another.

Lent arrives early this year, and we look forward to the opportunity to slow down, reflect, and refocus as we work through the days. Our Lenten theme this year is 'The Rest is Worship'. 'Be still…and know that I am God.'

Peace for the journey.

Contact the Circuit

Circuit Superintendent:

Revd Deborah Kirk
01823 334854
deborah.m.kirk@gmail.com

Minister in Training

Ildiko Haraszti
07507 875 893
ildikotutor@gmail.com

North Curry Parish Council

Volunteers for school appeals panel: Somerset Council are desperate for volunteers to become Independent Panel Members for School Appeals. This role involves listening to and deciding on admission, exclusion, and transport issues at schools in Somerset. All meetings are held online, no qualifications are needed, and full training is provided. If you are interested in volunteering for this rewarding role and giving back to your community, please contact neil.milne@somerset.gov.uk for more information.

Fly tipping: Unfortunately, several instances of fly tipping have been brought to our attention recently. Please be aware that this is a criminal offence that can lead to an unlimited fine and up to 5 years in prison! If you happen to spot anyone fly tipping, note down whatever details you can and report to the police.

Keeping Drains Clear: With recent storms and likely more to follow in the coming months, it is vitally important to ensure drains are kept clear. If you see a blocked drain, please be a local hero and do your best to clear it. Everyone can do their bit to help ensure flood water can clear.

The Parish Council Office opening hours are:

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

Telephone: 01823 490136 or email at parishcouncil@northcurry.com

Parish Council Diary for February 2024: 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.

North Curry Neighbourhood Plan

Please be aware of our Launch Date which will be on May 1st as part of the Annual Parish Meeting. This will be an opportunity for people to find out more, ask questions and raise any issues that are important.

We will also be holding a stall at the May Fair on May 11th to give you all another chance to engage with the process.

Following on from these 2 events a survey will be sent out to all residents of the Parish.

In the meantime you can keep up with developments by visiting our website – northcurryplan.org.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
NORTH CURRY

TAUNTON MINSTER
ST MARY MAGDALENE

Come & Sing
Gabriel Fauré's Requiem

Enter into the Holy Week journey through
Fauré's calm, serene and peaceful Requiem

Palm Sunday
24 March 2024
2.30pm for **3.00pm ~ 6.00pm**

Ellen Steward *Soprano* ~ Gregory Steward *Tenor*
John Bodiley *Organist* ~ Miles Quick *Conductor*

The Choir of Taunton Minster
will form the welcoming backbone for singers to join in with

The whole congregation is invited to join in
with the 'Libera me' (Deliver me) section

Registration and music issue from 2.30pm
Rehearsal 3.00pm with a tea break

Performance 5.00pm (all welcome)

£ pay-what-you-can donation to cover costs

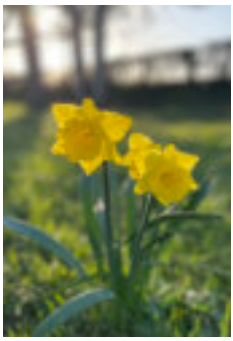
To book (please state voice part) or for further information:
email: music@tauntonminster.org or tel: 01823 272441

Stoke St Gregory



Mothering Sunday Service and Tea Party, 13th March at 3pm

We are taking a slightly different approach to our Mothering Sunday Service this year and holding a celebratory service in the afternoon, followed by tea. This will be a perfect opportunity to attend a family-friendly service at your Parish Church and bring all generations of the family to take part in that and then enjoy a slap-up tea in the School Room (formerly known as the Church Room).



If this sounds like a good way to treat your Mum on the day then please get in touch with Jane or Pat (numbers inside the front cover) to let us know likely numbers (we don't want to risk running out of cake!). Any donations will be used towards the repairs in the Lady Chapel.

There will be posies for the children to present to their Mums. If you would like to be involved in making these then please come to the School Room soon after 9am on Saturday 12th to meet Amelia who is in

Shrove Tuesday Talk and Supper, 13th February

We shall be marking the start of Lent in the usual fashion at St Gregory's with a home-cooked two-course meal followed by an interesting talk. This year, Paul Hockey, a local historian will be sharing discoveries concerning the very foundations of our heritage, going back before King Alfred to St Athelwin. He was a royal monk and the founder of a monastic existence on the Isle of Athelney two hundred years before Alfred (the December issue has more about how this chap is important to the whole benefice). Paul recently gave a fascinating talk about the battles near Burrowbridge, and lives, himself, in Athelney.



Please let Pat (490750 pat.sollis1@btinternet.com) or Jane (490508 janep-white@hotmail.com) know how many seats you would like to book.

Cost - £12.00 a head, please bring your own drink.

Stoke St Gregory

Parish Council Report

The Council met on Monday 8th January

Budget/Precept: Proposals for 2024-25 were discussed. It was agreed that expenditure should align with the precept, and that contingencies would be met from reserves. The PC need to be mindful that cuts in Somerset Council services will make more of a demand on PC funds. This equates to an uplift of the precept of 7%

An average band D home will rise from £47.60 to £50.58 per annum

There is currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor as Anne Merritt stepped down in November. Anne was Vice Chair and so this vacancy has been temporarily filled by John Hardy until May.

The first drop in surgery was held on Saturday 16th December for 2 hours at the HOTV Café.

Issues raised at the drop-in included:

- Tractors speeding in Woodhill
- Parking in and around the square causing problems.
- The Parish Council have asked respectfully if people could park in the car parks at the Church, the Royal Oak and the Playing fields.
- Village Hall not safely accessible at night for people with mobility problems due to the approach being so dark.Peter House will check the lighting is working properly.
- 30mph signage along Meare Green not clear and the issue of speeding along the straight road still a problem . A speed indicator device was discussed. There is money available to enhance the reduction in maximum speed. Highways have been contacted to approve and advise on the best location in Meare Green
- The bus stop at Woodhill has been badly damaged and the glass panes have been shattered. The PC are making enquiries with a view to repairing the damage.

The construction of a replacement Parish Noticeboard is in progress. This has been necessary due to the deterioration of the current board.

A new rubbish bin has been purchased to replace the broken one at the playing field entrance.

The Council agreed unanimously to purchase a defibrillator for the residents of Meare Green and Broad Lane with CIL funding and for it to be installed at the Willows and Wetland Centre. The PC are hoping to get a grant to purchase a third defibrillator for Curload. It is imperative that we find a suitable site for this in order to apply for the grant.

Danny James was in attendance at the public question time and he gave an update of progress on Project Play. The final design for the entire play area to include bike stands and planters has been completed. A different material is now part of the design which has resulted in a significantly lower cost. The total cost of the project will be just under £97,000. The project meets the criteria of many grants and 15 different funds are currently being looked at. £30,000 of CIL monies will go towards the cost

Charity Lunch, Monday 26th February in the Sunday School Room (formerly "Church Room")

It is in aid of Lifeboats, RNLI,who I'm sure you will want to support. Please do come and enjoy some delicious soups and a good chat.

We hope that our charity lunches become a habit again as they were before Covid. Over a year we used to raise more than £1000 for charities, it seems a waste to let that go, so please get in touch with Annette (490297) if you feel able to give a lunch or for for more information

Stoke St Gregory WI:

The new year at Stoke St Gregory WI started calmly with a needle felting workshop and the start of the winter quiz.

The February meeting, at the Village Hall on Tuesday 13th commencing at 7pm will see the tempo notched up a gear.

The evening will see Emma Randall make sure we are 'dance fit'.

Veronica Andrews will be giving the vote of thanks, Lin Willis and Mary Ginger are the tea hostesses and Janet Daniels is running the trade stall.



Members please note that we will also be holding our annual competition… not jam making or knitting, this is a lively, vibrant and modern WI.

Please bring along your funniest joke with a prize awarded to the one that receives the most laughs!

New members are always welcome.

Amelia Holt, President

01823 490401, 07985317252

Heart of the Village News

by Mike Blair, Chairman

The Royal Oak hosted a number of successful events over the festive season, peaking with an entertaining play from the Mummers, a Phase 3 Open Day and a superb 5 course banquet on New Years Eve.

The shop is continuing to provide excellent service to the local community and has a range of soft drinks to tempt the dry January participants, along with a number of hot snacks to tempt the pallet.

January is a quiet time for the hospitality industry and both Jenna and Phil are taking time off for well-earned holidays.

The Royal Oak will not be offering food for the 3-week period 17th January to the 1st week of February, food resuming with Jenna on Wednesday the 7th Feb. The kitchen will be deep cleaned during the closed period. The bar will operate as normal, with a January quiz night on the 17th, a combination of paid and volunteer support will cover for Phil's holidays, please be aware that service may be not quite as speedy as normal.

On Jenna's return we look forward to some delicious culinary offerings.

During January/February we will be producing a plan for the implementation of the phase 3 project which will result in an upgrade of the Royal Oak toilets, including disabled facilities, and a larger seating area in the café. It is anticipated that work on phase 3 start at the end of March.

Just to remind you that we are still in real need of more volunteers to assist in keeping us successful and no matter how little time you can spare, there will be something you can help us with. It is a really sociable and friendly atmosphere and we would welcome you with open arms.

Please see Ann Woods at the shop to discuss.

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

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Rotas

North Curry

	Sidespersons	Intercessors	Readers
4th Feb	Sally & Tom	Mary P.	Zillah
11th Feb	Janet & Pam	David F.	Sue
14th Feb	Tom	Mary P.	Tom
18th Feb	Sally	Helen G.	Annabelle
25th Feb	Lyn & Lorraine	Jenny	Jenny & Zillah



Stoke St Gregory

	Sidespersons	Readers	Cleaners	Flowers
4th Feb	Carolyn & Will	Carolyn	Penny & Simon	Sally
11th Feb			Linda & Brett	Remove all flowers for Lent (14th)
18th Feb	Veronica & Annette	Jane	Amelia & Ade	
25th Feb	Penny & Simon	Simon	Marilyn & Terri	
9th March	Volunteers to make posies for Mothering Sunday			

Services across the Benefice

4th February: Second Sunday before Lent

8am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Service of the Word
10am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church starting with breakfast
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Morning Worship

11th February: Sunday next before Lent

8.30am	Stoke St Gregory	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Burrowbridge	Service of the Word
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Morning Worship
11.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family service

14th February: Ash Wednesday

7pm	North Curry	Eucharist with Ashing

Friday 16th February and ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT

5pm	North Curry	Stations of the Cross

18th February: First Sunday of Lent

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	Morning Worship
4pm	North Curry	Evensong

24th February

10am	North Curry	Praying Together

25th February: Second Sunday of Lent

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

1st March

3pm	Stoke Baptists	World Day of Prayer united service