
The Athelney Magazine
Covering the church parishes of Burrowbridge, Lyng, North Curry and Stoke St Gregory
April 2024











Holy Week and Easter across the Benefice

Who's Who

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

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Treasurer	Margaret Williamson	01823 690471, emwilliamson@btinternet.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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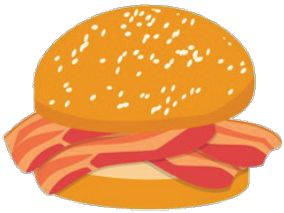
Lyng

Lyng Coffee mornings are held monthly on the final Saturday of the month, 10.30am.

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

To Submit Copy

Copy deadline is **14th April** 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 item, making 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.

To Subscribe

Subscriptions run from May to April each year.

Please pay your deliverer the £8 when they next deliver. After due consideration, we have realised that the BACS approach to subscrtioption is currently too complicated to administer. If you have already paid using this route, then your subscription will have been accepted, but for the future, please only use the direct payment to the person who delivers your magazine.

Thank you!

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Prices are for 10 editions of the magazine Full page £75, Half page £45, Quarter page £30. One off (single edition) adverts are £10 for up to one full page.

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Any questions please send an email to magazine@athelneybenefice.com and we will respond as soon as possible. Please use the group emails provided rather than sending things direct to one person.

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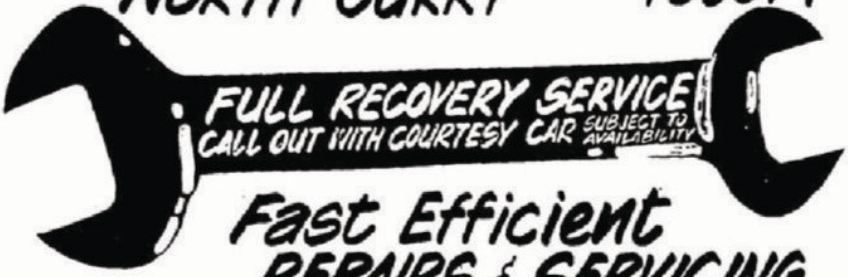


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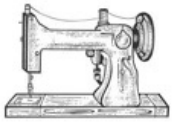
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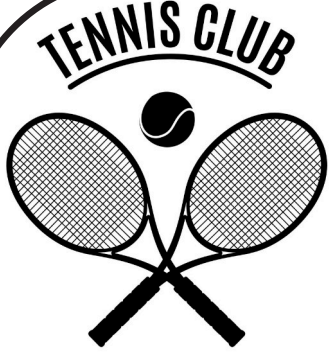


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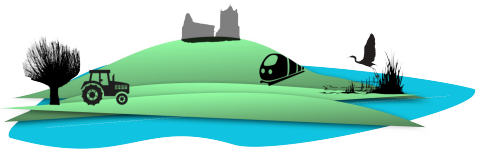


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The Athelney Benefice



St Athel-Who?

If you're still asking this question, then I invite you to look at the November 2023 issue of this magazine. St Athelwin was the hermit who came to The Isle of the Mallows in the Seventh Century and lived the rest of his days as a spiritual focus for the area. He is almost certainly buried on the Isle of Athelney (as we call it) and he kind of gave his name to the area.

OK: I admit, I have changed the spelling of his name (Ethelwin has become Athelwin) but only because it aligns better with "Athelney".

I mention him again now because next month big things are beginning in the Benefice. We are planning our first adventure with St Athelwin as the patron saint of the Athelney Benefice.

I shall explain…

One of the important things with any benefice is that we can see each one another as part of the same benefice and St Athelwin will help with this. We are of course one church, far more than a single benefice. We say "we are one body because we all share in one bread". That matters. Jesus encouraged us to think this way (they are his words) and for some time I have considered the Athelney Benefice as "One Church: Four Locations". On 11th May, next month, we will have our first Rogation Walk since before the pandemic and we will use St Athelwin as a focus for who we are on that walk.

A Rogation Walk is all about walking around or through the area of a parish or benefice, and it seems a good opportunity to combine Rogation with Athelwin. St Athelwin was more than "simply" a hermit. He came to our neck of the woods at a time when our ancestors were flipping back and forth between paganism and Christianity. St Athelwin forced the issue and during his lifetime and, probably due to his presence, the Athelney area and beyond became firmly Christian.

He was followed at the end of the ninth century by King Alfred (The Great) who, of course did far more than give his name to a pub, and the isle on which Alfred spent the year before his triumph against the Danes takes its name from our soon to be Patron Saint.

But what does all this have to do with Rogation and walking?

I am inviting you to join me and others on 11th May, as we "rogate" around the benefice (rogate is not a word: I have just made it up). The exact details are still to be finalised but the basic plan is to walk from

Lyng Church (where Athelwin arrived first into the area from Oxfordshire, his family home), via the Alfred Monument, following the East Deane Way to Burrowbridge, Stoke St Gregory and finally arriving in North Curry during the festivities for the May Fair. We hope to make a bit of an entrance, making a point, for sure, about the meaning of it all in the village.

We will pause at each of the benefice churches for a short act of worship and, of course, refreshments. We are planning a timetable that looks something like this:

- 8.30am: Gather at St Bartholomew's Church for bacon butties and other forms of breakfast.
- 9.00am: Leave St Bartholomew's for the monument.
- 9.30am: Hold a short act of worship.
- 9.45am: Walk to St Michael's in Burrowbridge, via Cutts and along the riverside.
- 10.30am: Hold a short act of worship and cake and coffee in church before walking across the fields in order to…
- 12pm: Arrive in Stoke St Gregory for an act of worship and then lunch in the Royal Oak.
- 1.30pm: Walk to North Curry, arriving around 3pm as the Fair is in full swing.

These timings are all open to fluctuation and of course weather will affect how it all goes. I walked the route recently and it is pretty muddy, still. I hope that by 11th May there will have been a bit more dry weather than currently (I am praying hard, honest).

Nobody is expected to walk the whole route if they would prefer not to (I shall be, but that's my problem). There will be Athelney Ubers on hand to ferry people around if they throw a shoe. If you don't want to walk at all, it will be perfectly acceptible to just show up at the villages and eat and worship.

The important thing is that we take the opportunity to recognise the unity and also the diversity of our four parishes. Just as the four Gospels tell the same story of The Good News in different ways, each of our villages and parishes has something unique to say about our faith today.

One Church: Four Locations

The Athelney Benefice is a wonderful example of God's presence in the world. The walk won't be one long prayer meeting, but there will be chance to observe and reflect upon the geography, the people and the abundance of goodness. Along with cake, butties and pub grub: what's not to like? Many more details can be found on the Benefice website:

athelneybenefice.com/rogation. Please visit and sign up!

From Bishop Michael

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Worship is key

By Michael Langrish, Assistant Bishop for Bath and Wells



In January I was back in my old Diocese of Exeter, marking the death of Sabine Baring Gould 100 years before. What an extraordinary person he was, with an incredible range and roundedness of learning and interests, in an equally full and fulfilled life. He was a great traveller and prolific writer of biographies, folklore, travel books, theology, novels and hymns, including some, such as 'Onward Christian soldiers' that remain popular today. He was a linguist and translator; and, as an archaeologist on Dartmoor, very much a pioneer in the field. For many, his greatest achievement was his collecting the old folk songs of Devon and Cornwall, providing inspiration for such composers as Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Holst. He was also the Squire of Lewtrenchard and, being ordained, he appointed himself as parish priest as well!

This he saw as his true vocation. His responsibility, and that of the local church, was the cure of souls from cradle to grave. This meant a care for the spiritual wellbeing of all in the community and for their bodily and social welfare too. Striving for good health and housing must go hand in hand with growth in faith and prayer. All should be encouraged to full humanity, to holy discipleship, to the recognition, and use, of whatever gifts anyone possessed for the common good.

But, underlying all of this, one other aspect of this great man's life speaks very strongly to me now. That is how he understood worship and its relationship to the whole of life. 'To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God'.

This edition of Manna contains encouraging stories of New Christian Worshipping Communities in Bath and Wells. Worshipping is key. I am reminded of the later words of Archbishop William Temple: 'It is sometimes said that conduct is supremely important, and worship helps it. The truth is that worship is supremely important, and conduct tests it.'

Martin's Musings



A good friend once when asked to describe me said I was 'mildly eccentric'. Now, when I heard about this, I was a bit miffed. Not about being eccentric, which I am, but the mildly bit!

For, you see, all through my life, I have really enjoyed my eccentricity. I started young. At boarding school, while most of the other prefects played loud pop music and had posters of their favourite pop stars on their study walls, my friend Peter and I enjoyed Earl Grey Tea and Battenburg cake (my favourite) every afternoon at 4.00 o'clock to the dulcet strains of Mozart or Bach with fine print of Constable's Haywain on the wall.

Now I think we all have a little eccentricity inside us. It has helped me a lot that I am a priest. One of my favourite films is 'The Bishop's wife' starring Cary Grant and David Niven. In it the maid has a wonderful line about her employer. 'No one expects him to be normal – he's a Bishop' And that applies, thankfully, to all us priests.

My friend Jenny happens to like crocodiles and is the proud owner of a wonderful t-shirt proclaiming her to be 'The Crocodile Lady'. Now, personally I prefer Cavalier Spaniels. For one thing, they are definitely cuddlier and for another, when I wake in the morning, they won't have crept over in the night for a midnight snack!

Another friend showed me a wonderful poem about a lady saying that when she became older, she was going to wear purple. Now the trouble is, if I started wearing purple all the real bishops would only get grumpy and no one likes a grumpy bishop! I suppose I might get away with it if I pretended to be a bishop from one of our former colonies: Bishop of Matabele Land has a certain ring to it!

However, that might be carrying my eccentricity a little too far. Perhaps instead, I might become a King's Chaplain – they wear wonderful scarlet cassocks you know.



So, Your Majesty, if you happen to read this article and there is a vacancy. …?

The main thing is that, as God's children we are all a wonderful and interesting diverse lot. So, my dears, just be yourselves and enjoy life to the full.

Burrowbridge



The High Point of Easter Day

I keep forgetting that there are in fact two 5.30s each day. I am well acquainted with the evening version, but the morning one keeps slipping from my memory.



This year it was even worse since, with the clocks going forward, my body thought it was 4.30am when the alarm went off and I stumbled around the house in darkness hoping not to wake Revd Mrs Vicar. Her duties weren't until 10am…

As with every year that I've been scurrying up Burrow Mump at Easter (so far), the sun shone as it appeared over Aller Hill, and we sang, "Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!" We said prayers, we listened to scripture and contemplated the renewal of all that is good in the world. Then we went our ways—over twenty of us who had managed to set our clocks correctly—to continue to celebrate Easter for the rest of the day. A fine time and a meaningful moment. Thank you to everyone who joined in. Blessings to all you who were still tucked up in the warm. This time, next year… in Burrowbridge!

Stations: Dedicated!

Thank you to the family of Dorothy Tottle, who died in 2022. On Good Friday we gathered in St Michael's to dedicate the newly erected Stations of the Cross, provided by her children, Julie, Anne and Michael. We held a short service and then performed the first "journey" around the fourteen stations, reflecting on the last hours of Christ.



It was poignant and appropriate to do so on Good Friday. Thank you to Dorothy's family. Thank you all wh attended.



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Lyng



A Village Hall Overhaul

It's been a long while in the doing, but the East Lyng Village Hall, opposite the church, is almost ready for a reopening.

A great deal of renovation has been happening since last year: new toilet, new access, new kitchen … lots of new things. But the same hall: a place to gather and share village life.

As with many building projects, things can take longer than expected, but it will be worth the wait.

The work has been undertaken by wonderfully committed village residents and in that way is also a great message for everyone: getting together to make a difference to our own environment can itself be a project!

Thank you to everyone who has been getting this sorted!

More to follow… but we are very hopeful that the hall ill be ready in time to host the launch of the inaugural St Athelwin Rogation walk next month (11th May).

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!

Spot the difference

Lyng Church held a "stripping of the altar" ceremony this Maundy Thursday, for the first time in a long while. The ceremony, a significant part of Holy Week, and a preparation for the austere sorrow of Good Friday, is a moment of solemn contemplation, as all the beauty and finery of the church furnishings are removed from the altar and sanctuary, and the church is left bare. It is a reminder of the despair of the crucifixion. The altar cloths and drapes are replaced on Holy Saturday in readiness for the celebration of Easter Day. It is good to hold these ceremonies. They remind us of the importance of our worship and faith. Thank you to all who helped.





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-4.30pm. If you would like to join our friendly team of volunteers please leave a message for on 01823 491414 or email us at 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: All from the Youth Football Club!

Big Bash 2024

Planning is underway! Please let us know what you think of the Big Bash (our main fund-raising event) and any suggestions you may have.

Odds of winning are 1 in 68! Why not join and help us with regular upkeep. Cost is still just £12 per year. Just drop a note to: whitestreet@northcurry.com

200 Club winners

March

1st Morag Woudhuysen
2nd Nick Bradstock
3rd Jane Fairfax

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



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NORTH CURRY SOCIETY

Wednesday 17th April: Researching your Somerset house

The Society's April talk will be given by Esther Hoyle, a member of the Archive staff at South West Heritage Trust, based at the Somerset Heritage Centre, Norton Fitzwarren. Given the large number of historic buildings in North Curry and hereabouts, this is likely to be a fascinating guide to anyone beginning research into their house or more generally the built environment of the parish, and an opportunity for members to say what they themselves may already have discovered.The talk will be illustrated with a Power Point presentation.



South West Heritage Trust is a charity (and company limited by guarantee), supported by Somerset and Devon Councils. Several important public and private local records are archived for safe keeping at the Heritage Centre.

North Curry Society meet in the Village Hall, generally on the third Wednesday of each month for talks on the environment and heritage of the village and its surrounds and the wonderful people who live and have lived nearby. With tea or coffee from 7.30pm, talks start at 8pm. Members (Annual Subscription £15) and visitors (your £5 entrance fee will be credited to you if you decide to join) are assured of a warm welcome.

Contact Details

For further details, please contact the Chairman, Colin Trim 01823 490337, colinhtrim@gmail.com



KEEP THE DATES FREE!

North Curry Music Festival

North Curry Music Festival

14th-16th June 2024

Folk group
The Mellstock Band - 14th June

International classical trio
Kosmos Ensemble - 15th June

Free Families Event
Magic Flute Reduced - 16th June

and much more!

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: 27th April, 9.30am

---

The May Fair, 11th May



11th May sees the Annual North Curry May Fayre and as usual St Peter and St Paul's has two stalls booked. One stall will be for cakes and the second a bottle stall.

A request for help!

We need lots of donations for both stalls, so may please think of what you can contribute to the cakes, whether by baking or something else, and dig in to the wine cellar for some vino or indeed any type of liquid beverage/sauce (in date of course…!)

Donations may be left either with Louise Clarke (Easter Cottage, opposite the Post Office) or with Mary Piers (Marandellas, 2 Overlands).



We will also need volunteers for the stalls. This is not necessarily for the full two hours; just a half hour along the line is greatly appreciated.

Please contact Mary Piers 01823 491434. Everyone is normally very generous so may I say thank you in advance.

Every little helps!



Born in the USA: Martin Young

North Curry and District Amateur Gardeners, Friday 5th April 7:45 for 8pm at North Curry Village Hall

A colourful, illustrated talk exploring the wide range of trees, shrubs & perennials from Canada, USA & Northern Mexico - widely used in gardens in the UK - and how to get the best from them in your garden.

NEXT MONTH! Friday 3rd May 7.45 for 8pm at North Curry Village Hall: Improve one's memory by gardening, Steve Taylor

Hopefully this will be useful to those of us with patchy memories! We are a lively friendly club and guests and new members are always welcome. So do come along and join us for the talk and stay for refreshments and a chat afterwards. Any queries or questions, call Sue on 491658.

The North Curry Calendar 2025

The search is now on for images with impact and atmosphere to grace the walls of our homes throughout 2025. If you live in the parish then we want your photos of the village and village life taken throughout the calendar year. Great images can be achieved in all weather conditions, and we look forward to receiving the fruits of your creativity. A panel of judges, appointed by the PCC, will select the 14 photographs we need after the closing date of 31st August. Your submissions are eagerly awaited!

Rules and Conditions

1. Photos must be in landscape format (longer edge at the base!).
2. Photos must be high-resolution digital images (not less than 200 dpi) to enable quality printing at A4 size. NB most mobile phone cameras provide this level of definition.
3. Individual files must be accompanied by the name and address of the photographer, the location of the image, and preferably, but not essentially, a title and the month the image was shot. The photographer must declare possession of the copyright.
4. Mail files to magazine@athelneybenefice.com by the closing date (31st August 2024).
5. Please note that no fees will be paid to entrants and that the proceeds of the sale of the calendar are to the benefit of the parish church. Selection of the images will be based on photographic merit and suitability for the requirements of the calendar.

North Curry Parish Council

March Litter Pick:



Thank you to everyone who attended the March community litter pick event- it was great to see so many of you there as usual. Thank you all for your efforts to help keep our Parish beautiful and free of litter.

Annual Parish Meeting:

This year's Annual Parish Meeting (APM) will be held on Wednesday 1st May at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. We are very excited that this APM will also host the launch of our Neighbourhood Plan- there will be information stands for you to learn more about what's going on and ask questions. We have arranged for some interesting speakers to come, including a Director from the Police & Crime Commissioner - Marc Hole, and Village Agent- Tina Talbot. There will be wine, crisps, tea and coffee, and of course biscuits!

A Safety Reminder to Walkers/Runners:

It is great to see parishioners out walking and running as the weather is (at times) improving, but can we please remind you that you should be facing oncoming traffic when walking/running on the roads so you can see other vehicles and vice versa- this is actually in the Highway Code. If you have your back to oncoming traffic, especially if you have earphones in, you may be unaware that there is a vehicle behind you. Please also wear something bright and reflective, ideally hi-vis, if running in the evenings.

The Parish Council Office opening hours are:

Wednesdays 10:00am – 1:00pm

Thursdays 1:00pm – 4:00pm

Telephone No: 01823 490136 or contact us at parishcouncil@north-curry.com

Parish Council Diary for March 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 Village Choir

Spring Concert

Fauré Requiem

Insanae et Vanae Curae (Haydn)

Ascribe Unto the Lord (Wesley)

They that Go Down to the Sea in Ships (Sumsion)

Saturday 20th April at 7:30 PM

North Curry Parish Church

Tickets £10 from Village Post Office and Choir Members

www.northcurryvillagechoir.org.uk

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. Revds Simon and Martin can be found praying "the daily office each Tue (SSG), Wed (BB), Thu (Lyng) and Fr (NC). All are welcome

NORTH CURRY **F I L M** CLUB



On **Wednesday 24th April** we are showing the acclaimed film from 2022, **Empire of Light**. It has an excellent cast including Olivia Colman.

It is a powerful film about the power of human connection, set in an English coastal town in the early 1980s, centred around an art deco cinema.

Doors & bar open at 7pm, with the film starting at 7.30pm.

Also open to non-members (£5).

Please see our website for trailers or use the QR code: www.northcurryfilmclub.org.uk. tWe also have a Facebook page.



A new men's shed in Beauchamp House

Beauchamp House, a care home in Taunton has launched its own Men's Shed to encourage residents to get together and join in conversation. The residents at the care home, based on Village Road in Hatch Beauchamp, have created the club to boost the opportunities for male residents to socialise together. Chantal, the home's Activities Lead, was assisted by Roy and Terry from The Parrett Community Shed for the first Beauchamp House Men's Shed session, which will meet monthly.

It was inspired by resident, Chris, who was previously a member of The Parrett Community Shed before moving to Beauchamp House care home. He spoke to the other residents at the care home about how much joy he got out of being part of the community project, who were keen to form their own club onsite.

The home wanted to start their own Shed after conversations with some of the residents and were pleased at the response they got from the other men who were excited to join in. It brings joy and encouragement to all who join in. It is especially helpful for new residents as they get used to their new home

During the first meeting of the Men's Shed the residents made a wooden flower planter using pre-cut wooden pieces prepared by members of The Parrett Community Shed. Afterwards, people were able to sit together to enjoy a beer and a chat while marvelling at their newly made creations. Chris, the resident who helped to create the Men's Shed, said: "It was so nice to get together with the other residents and lovely to see Roy and Terry again. I've enjoyed being part of a Men's Shed again."

There are around 900 Men's Sheds across the UK which promote wellbeing and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation while the members use their practical skills to build, fix and restore items.

Terry from The Parrett Community Shed said: "We were pleased to be invited to help launch the Beauchamp House Men's Shed following the success of our own group. It was lovely to see Chris again and to see the residents happily working on wooden flower planters. Over the coming months, we have lots of ideas for them including making some outdoor flower planters and bird boxes, which they can put up in the home's garden."



Stoke St Gregory



Heart of the Village: Hope springs eternal!



Both the shop/ cafe and the pub/restaurant were extremely busy during the recent weekend, with customers associated with the highly successful Stoke Stampede and the much-enjoyed Mothers Day celebration.

If you were not booked in for the special roast Sunday lunch you still had the option of the BBQ in the sunny patio/garden area, which proved highly popular with spectators and runners alike.

The weekend also saw 2 new innovations in the pub - the introduction of Saturday lunchtime opening, by customer request, had a slow but promising start, and Monday tea-time saw the first of our monthly series of pizza evenings, courtesy of the Firehouse's Pizza Rocket, which did excellent business.

As for Saturday lunch, we opened the pub specially for the pizza event, on both occasions manned by volunteers. We will look to do this kind of thing more often, to bring special additional opening sessions to provide a varied assortment of attractions for the community to enjoy.

In the coming month we have the culmination of the 6 Nations Rugby, St Patrick's Day, and of course Easter. Watch out for information on what your friendly local shop and pub have lined up for you.

And don't miss our new Too Good To Go offer - end-of-day food at a bargain price. You can get details from Jo in the shop.

There's plenty happening at the Royal Oak - do come down and join in.

A few dates for things to come…

Langport Mummers return visit on Sunday 14th April, 12pm

Sweet Coppin Ladies Clog dancers, Tuesday 6th June, 7.30 pm

Taunton Morris Men return visit Wednesday 17th July, 8pm… till late!

Contact details

Pub: Phil, 01823 490602
email: royaloakssg@gmail.com

Shop: Jo, 07842 992825, email: shop@hotvssg.org

Folk events: Tim, 01823 490528

Water, Water Everywhere!

by Ian Upshall,

A phrase that has been long used to summarise the immediate impact of climate change in the UK is "Hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters". That certainly seems to be living up to the hype.

Stoke Environment Group

Whatever one's views on climate change – and there are some who do not believe there is a baseline shift in climate – its difficult to argue that many of us have not seen a change in the seasons and the recent absence of really wintery weather. The bulbs are shooting up, the hedges are taking on a green hue and the creatures that sleep through the 'harsh' winter weather are appearing earlier and earlier.

Whether one believes we are witnessing a significant shift in the climate or, what we are seeing is simply a natural 'cycle' that will return us to more 'traditional' weather patterns, we are seeing change. Recent TV and press reports have highlighted the difficulties faced by those relying on access to the land that has now been sodden for many months. And so, it seems sensible to at least have a plan to create a sustainable and safe environment and infrastructure.

The EA come under a lot of criticism around this way, so it was good to see their representatives at The Williams Hall explaining the changes they are making to water management around our section of the Tone. Phase 1 – to repair the north bank between New Bridge and Hook Bridge is all but complete and Phase 2 is about to start (subject, I imagine, to the weather!). Have a look at their website for more information.

SEG has invited the Environment Agency to **Envirofair 24 on 1 June 2024** at The Williams Hall. We also have Andrew Clegg coming to give a short overview of water quality on the Levels and Moors and the longer-term trends that are apparent. If you have an interest on the sustainability of our wonderful moors, then we would recommend popping along to the Envirofair.



We have now completed the planting in our community orchard with new fruit bushes, cordon



trees and some crab apples – all of which are beginning to show signs of life. Hopefully a bumper harvest will follow and maybe some wassailing later in the year to boost the crop even more!

SEG is also hoping that we see more evidence of no-mow May this year in public spaces. Obviously, access and safety are important so even a margin around the edges of open spaces will have a beneficial impact. A one metre 'set aside' either side of a hedge is really important for small mammals, bugs, pollinators and invertebrates - a place where they can be relatively safe from predators whilst recovering from their winter slumbers and to take in some sun. So, if you have the opportunity, please start considering how you might contribute to no-mow May 2024 – a one square metre of uncut lawn will make a difference and you might discover something you never knew existed under your feet!

If you would like more information on working with SEG or you are just inquisitive, please contact us on envirostoke@yahoo.com or 07837 764367.

More information can be found on our Facebook page, Envirostoke.

Easter Flowers



Amelia says, "The Church looked stunning for Easter! Thank you to all who decorated." (And the vicar agrees…)



Amelia also says, "I'll try to keep the Easter flowers going as long as possible so please do not remove your arrangement early as I may reuse surviving flowers to fill the spots." (The vicar is clueless regarding flower arranging, but is so grateful to Amelia et al.!)

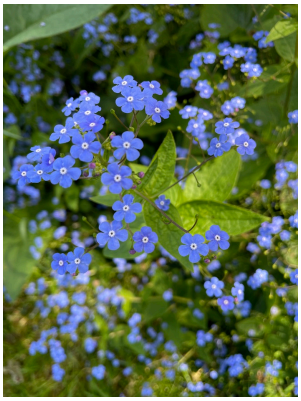
Annette Gage starts the post Easter rota off on the 21st April for a fortnight. (Thank you, Annette and everyone for all the ongoing flower arranging and the beauty it brings into the church.)

Open Gardens at Hillcrest, Curload

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On Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th May Hillcrest Gardens are open from 1-5pm for the The National Garden Scheme which supports medical charities such as McMillan Cancer, Marie Curie Nurses and others. With views over the levels, this 6 acre garden offers plenty of interest, including a standing stone. Enjoy woodland walks, varied borders, a flowering meadow and several ponds. There are greenhouses, orchards, a produce garden and a newly built large gravel garden.





You can round off or, indeed, start your visit with delicious tea and cakes. These are provided by the church with proceeds going to the church maintenance fund. The admission fee is £5 which all goes to the National Garden Scheme. Children are free and dogs are welcome on a lead. There are also plant sales. On site parking is available but if you are coming up from the village please consider walking or cycling. The garden is mostly level with gentle sloping paths . There are no steps.

The Stoke Levellers

Stoke St Gregory OAP group has evolved!

Now known as The Stoke Levellers we are a lively and friendly group who meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 2.00pm for an afternoon of entertainment, refreshments and good company at Williams Hall, Stoke St Gregory. During the summer months we have coach trips to various destinations and also enjoy getting together for afternoons such as cream teas.

If you would like to join us and become a member of our group you would be very welcome. Our very lovely chairman is Martin Mudie, and if you would like more information please ring Martin on 01823 490371, Jane Smith, Secretary on 01823 491428 or Jenny Priddle, Treasurer on 01823 490740

Charity Lunch, Monday 29th April at 12.30pm

There will be a charity lunch on April 29th at the Baptist Chapel in aid of Safe Families. The usual time of 12.30 to 2pm.

As always we look for more people to hold a lunch for their good cause. We have made a good start to the year, so let's get into the habit, it's fun! We collected £330 for RNLI. Thank you!

The Langport Mummers are returning!

Due to popular demand, the Langport Mummers will be returning to the Community Pub/Hub, The Royal Oak Stoke St Gregory on Sunday 14th April at 12 noon. The troupe have devised a new "play" based loosely around the story of Alfred.

The "Langport Mummers" will perform The Alfred play, based on King Alfred and his battle with Guthrum, the Viking. Alfred is known to have been based close to Stoke St Gregory, before his battle with Guthrum's Great Heathen Army around the 8th century.

Stoke folk can expect much merriment from this eccentric colourful local troupe, who perform traditional Mumming play with contemporary twists! It's family friendly, FREE and there is no need to book. On one of their recent visits to Stoke, they loved the welcome at the Royal Oak, a spokesperson said "we encountered a very generous audience at Stoke and we collected £183 for the Red Cross which we have paid directly to the charity.

The Royal Oak is a shining example of a community pub and we look forward to performing there again!"



The Mummers have done some home-work on their Alfred and the Viking play, so you will find some new lines and the usual rumbustious burlesque! and the happy ending with Viking Guthrum coming alive in Stoke.

Heart of the Village – Community Shop & Pub

Whatever happened to that sociable drink you used to enjoy after Sunday morning church? Why not revive an old habit? Or start a new one?

The Royal Oak is your community pub.

In addition to Wednesday-Saturday evenings it is open, warm and waiting for you and your friends from noon each Sunday. Why not call in and socialise for a while on your way home?

Or, better still, why not book in for our excellent, traditional Sunday roast dinner? All reviews are good. To book a table please call us on 01823 490602, fill in the contact form through this site or email us at royaloakssg@gmail.com.

You can help make the Royal Oak even more of a community pub. Give it a try!

And don't forget our community shop, which is open on Sunday from 9am to 12pm for those last-minute items you may need. They will be happy to serve you.







Stoke St Gregory WI

The April members meeting of Stoke St Gregory WI will see a representative from the Somerset & Dorset Air Ambulance come to talk to us about their operations and the working of the charity.

The meeting starts at 7pm in the village hall on Tuesday 9th April.

Judy Blair and Mary Ginger are on refreshments, Lesley Dyson is running the trade stall, and we need a volunteer please to give the vote of thanks.

New members will be warmly welcomed. Why not give the WI a try for a mere £4:50? More details from the President Amelia Holt 07985317252.

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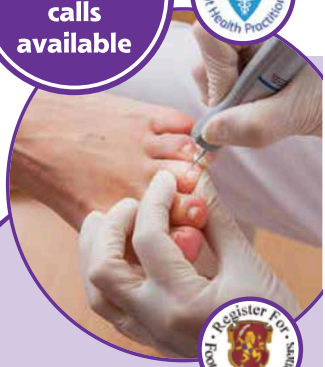
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If you think we could be of help to you or to someone you know, please get in touch.

Our meals are cooked by volunteer cooks in their own kitchens and delivered by friendly local people.
The current cost is £3.90/meal.

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).





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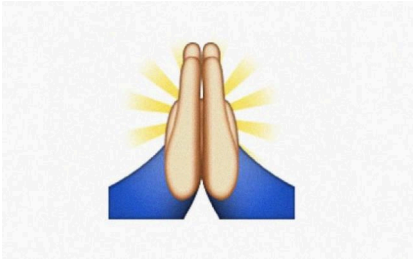
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Rotas

North Curry

Sidesmen

14th April	S Keele, P Burgess
21st April	S Keele
28th April	T Jeanes, L Paul
5th May	H Comrie, T Jones



Readers

14th April	Z Sykes
21st April	D Farnham, M Piers
28th April	D Walker
5th May	S Keele

Intercessions

14th April	D Walker
21st April	H Griffiths
28th April	J Satchwell
5th May	M Piers

Stoke St Gregory

Sidespersons

14th April	Annette & Veronica
21st April	Carolyn & Will
28th April	Penny & Simon
5th May	Barbara

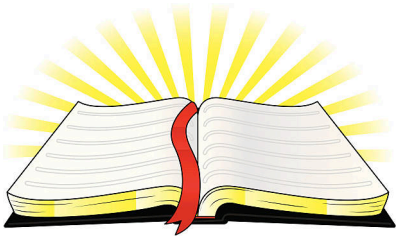
Readers

Please read both Old Testament readings as per the bulletin. If changing weeks please advise Jane or Pat

7th April	Sally
14th April	Steve
21st April	Jo
28th April	Simon
5th May	Barbara (Evening Prayer)

Church Cleaners

30th Mar	Linda & Brett
7th April	Marilyn & Terri
14th April	Annette & Martin
21st April	Dave & Janet
26th April	Penny & Simon
24th Mar	Amelia & Ade
28th April	Linda & Brett
5th May	Marilyn & Terri



Services across the Benefice

7th April: Second Sunday of Easter

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
10am	Burrowbridge	United Benefice Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family service
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service

14th April: Third Sunday of Easter

8.30am	Stoke St Gregory	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church (breakfast at 10am)
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service

21st April: Fourth Sunday of Easter

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family Service
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service
6pm	North Curry	Evensong

28th April: Fifth Sunday of Easter

9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family Service
11am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11am	North Curry Methodists	Holy Communion
4pm	North Curry Methodists	Pet Service

5th May: Sixth Sunday fo Easter

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Eucharist
10am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family Service
11am	North Curry Methodists	Service
6pm	Stoke St Gregory	Evensong

9th May: Ascension Day

7pm	North Curry	Eucharist





Holy Week and Easter across the Benefice



