The Athelney Magazine



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

October 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
Associate priest	Revd Martin Mudie	01823 490371, mmudie07@gmail.com
Reader	Ralph Roberts	01823 490933
Treasurer	Pat Sollis	01823 490750, pat.sollis1@btinternet.com
Safeguarding	Owen Cullwick	01823 490681, owen@cullwick.co.uk
Administrator	Alison Perry	07470 838707, office@athelneybenefice.com
Burrowbridge		
Churchwarden	Julie Pocock	01823 698915, julie.pocock@btconnect.com
Churchwarden	Sue Nicholas	01823 698814, pnicholas971@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Rob Ellis	07410 634511, rellisscr@hotmail.com
Lyng		
Churchwarden	Alison Perry	07470838707, office@athelneybenefice.com
Churchwarden	Angie Martin	07936 050230, a.martin78630@gmail.com
Treasurer	Margaret Williamson	01823 690471, emwilliamson@btinternet.com
North Curry		
Churchwarden	Tom Jeanes	01823 490562, lawnmoorfarm@hotmail.com
Churchwarden	Mary Piers	01823 491434, marypiers@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Richard Sykes	nctreasurer@athelneybenefice.com
Stoke St Gregory		
Churchwarden	Vacant	
Treasurer	Steve Loveridge	01823 698340, stevejloveridge@gmail.com
School Room Bookings	Pat Sollis	01823 490750, pat.sollis1@btinternet.com

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.

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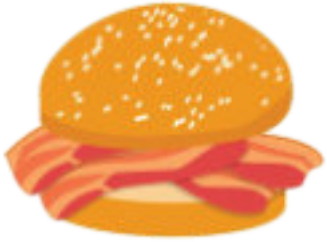
Lyng

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

To Submit Copy

Copy deadline is **14th October** for the November Magazine; Please note: July is a double month.

Please send **content** in an email attachment (ideally a Microsoft Word document) 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. ***If none of this makes any sense, please just write it out long hand and put it through the vicarage door…***

To Subscribe

Subscriptions run from May to April each year.

Please pay your deliverer the £8 requested. After due consideration, we have realised that the BACS approach to subscription 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!

To Advertise

If you wish to advertise in the magazine, please contact us via email using this address: magads@athelneybenefice.com

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.

To Contact

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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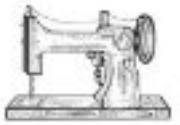
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Which side are you on?

A year on from the horrific scenes in southern Israel, a year of violent retaliation for those horrific scenes, a year of little to no movement regarding any attempts at, first of all making it stop and then second, of ensuring it doesn't happen again. And all the while, across the planet, scenes of similar—if less newsworthy—conflagrations continue to destroy lives: Sudan, Congo, Yemen, Kashmir, Nigeria, Ukraine (still quite newsworthy), USA (not a major war, for sure, but there's a lot of tension and conflict leading up to the election), Haiti, Korea, to name some. I suspect a Google of various world news agencies might raise some more points of conflict. In their own ways each causes the same agony and desolation. So, what do we do about it? Indeed, is there anything to be done at all? As an eternal disciple of hope, I say, yes… of course there is. Otherwise… what? But, also as a disciple of hope, I know that it can both fill our hearts with enthusiasm and also empty it of all light. It depends on who we are, where we are and how our day is going. So, I approach these points of conflict with as open a mind as I can, and ask: which way is it to reconciliation?

That very word is charged. It is a warm, mellifluous idea, filled with hope and intention for peace and yet can confuse and tangle us up as we ask therefore, "which side are you on?" Conflict is a tangle. and the distant root of meaning behind the idea of reconciliation has echoes of tangled hair. The -cilia- bit in the middle is from the Latin for "hair". To reconcile is to comb the knots from a tangled web. To untangle is to reconcile. The art of diplomacy, however, is not simply about carrying a suitable comb or brush, but to be seen to desire the reconciliation one is engaged to seek. Throwing a comb at a tangled web does nothing. There must be patience and intent.



I write this as the 7th October looms and I hear the global powers (US, China, Russia, Europe et al.) jockeying for position as to who supports whom. China has thrown in its lot with Hamas, (whom it does not consider to be a terrorist organisation). The USA is firmly behind the Israeli state and always will be according to recent pronouncement from the Oval Office.

I tremble at these stances. In my faint but big-hearted and vanishingly small voice I wail at the

polarisation being taken by these geopolitical big-guns. There is talk of reconciliation and talk of ceasing fire. There is talk of how this almighty conflict must be sorted out but there they stand, on the sidelines of the battlefield shouting encouragement towards their chosen side. How can that bring an untangling of the knots?

Reconciliation cannot happen when sides are taken. Reconciliation requires a desire for one thing: to be rid of the knots. Reconciliation requires that no single hair is considered more important than another. A knot has no sides, only chaos and confusion.

Our issue as humans is that we all to easily ignore this basic practical need to see all as teh same, of no hierarchy. We so easily cling to who is better or who is worth more or who is good and who is bad. There is scripture that seeks to demolish this easy option of taking sides. in his letter to the Colossians, Paul writes:

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." (Col 3:28-29)

Once we recognise God in every human, no matter where they live nor what they believe, we can find ways not to take sides. It is easy to preach but so difficult to live. So quickly we adopt a stance that it's "us v. them" or, as in old Western movies, white hat: good, black hat: bad. But stand against it we must. And in doing so, that small voice we have needs to be heard across the world as the only way to really make a difference. We can begin with those we bump into and find challenging. Our own desire to comb and brush can lead to a world of joy and freedom.

Of course, it's not a quick fix and it's not a universal panacea. Reconciliation was all but impossible once the Nazis annexed Austria, perhaps. But the issue for us all is not to wait until it is too late to untangle things. Those of us with sufficient hair will regularly comb and brush out any tangles before they become impossible knots. We should do the same with all our relationships.

The assault on Israel on 7th October was horrific, and I am not surprised that Israel has retaliated, and although I have my views on the extent of this retaliation, I can grasp the desire for reprisals. Even so, again and again and again I want to say, "Enough. Lets step aside from the relentless retribution and truly see one another as valid before God. No Israeli and no Palestinian. No slave or master… only humanity seeking a place to live and grow." I get that it is difficult to see beyond the present violence, but I pray that those who have taken sides can step back from that. Theodore Roosevelt it was who suggested, "Speak softly and carry a big stick." I would like to suggest instead, "Speak softly and carry a robust comb."

Martin's Musings

As I sit writing this in the very comfortable sitting room of the Villa Martini, I gaze upon a very peaceful scene.

On the TV a recent recording of the Mozart clarinet concerto is playing adding to the serenity of the scene. The girls are slumbering peacefully after their tea, and all is well with their doggy world and mine. Annie is in her favourite bed – she does have several dotted throughout the Villa - and snuggling up, unbeknown to her, is Emma. Emma is very crafty about this as her granny doesn't like sharing her bed, so she waits till Annie is sound asleep before she tip-paws her way in. Both have an idyllic look on their faces.

Now we all love our home in the lovely village of Stoke St Gregory, and we love Somerset which is a truly beautiful county. I only have one tiny complaint, which is that some of the country lanes are just not wide enough – built as they were for farm carts and cattle and sheep – and having to cope with increasingly wide motor cars. Now this not a problem when the road is straight as I can pull in if another car or lorry or even tractor approaches. You see I am a NICE driver. I can't help it. This was because Mother brought me up to be nice and it is in my DNA. However, a couple of Sundays ago, I had cause to regret my niceness.

I was driving with the girls to one of my favourite cafes at Maunsell Lock. If you don't know it, the cakes are wonderful, and they make a really good Latte. I was driving slowly down the windy lane when suddenly a large black car swung round the bend in the *middle of the road* and stopped dead, expecting me to drive round him. So, ever helpful, I drove the car up the steep bank scratching what was left of my paintwork when suddenly the was a *loud bang*. The front tyre had hit a large boulder hidden in the grass. I eventually managed to get my car past the other car whose driver didn't even bother to say thank you.

I had the tyre checked the next day and luckily there was no damage, which is more than could be said for my shattered nerves. However, I have come to a radical decision. In future, when encountering such a car approaching me, I shall pull into the side of the road and let them pass me. So, if you see a dusty red car approaching driven by a large clerical gentleman in a rather battered Panama hat.



You have been warned!

However, in the spirit of these merry little articles, I would like to end this piece on a happier note; so I wish you all a very happy October.

A light which shines in the darkness

by Bishop Trevor Willmott
Assistant Bishop for the Diocese of Bath and Wells



The custodial sentences imposed on many of those involved in the recent riots in communities across our country have highlighted, yet again, the issue of criminal justice and the pressures and strains within the prison system. The seemingly ever-increasing size of the prison population; the appalling conditions within many of our older prisons, especially those in our inner cities; the almost total lack of provision for education and rehabilitation and an apparent unwillingness by those elected to Parliament to consider whether the whole of our justice system needs a radical overhaul have all resulted in much media comment.

But one part of the prison system which has not been mentioned is the invaluable role played by those who serve as Chaplains. Prison and restorative justice have been a constant thread almost throughout the whole of my life beginning with my first visit while still in my teens to what was then called a Borstal.

Since then, I've had the privilege of working with chaplaincy teams across the whole of the prison estate. I've witnessed at first hand the extraordinary work done those teams, lay and ordained, of all faiths, working together to witness to God's love in Christ and caring for all those in the prison system, both staff and prisoners. I've often said to those on the outside, if you want to know what true collaborative ministry looks like in practice, look no further than a chaplaincy team. While each member remains true to his or her particular faith, the barriers which often divide people of faith have no part in that shared work of witness and service.

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Sadly, all too often, the work of Chaplaincies not just in prison but in all aspects of our human life, in education, hospital, mental health, care homes and many other places, is barely known – that is, until we need their care. But Chaplaincies are the yeast which leaven our society. The light which shines in the darkness. Society, as we long and pray for it to be, would be the poorer without them.



Burrowbridge



Harvest and lunch and a lot of chatter

Our united benefice services (UBS) used to be monthly affairs. Every second Sunday of the month, some would gather in one of our four churches and celebrate the Eucharist together, and also every fifth Sunday too. Making sixteen gatherings every year (if my arithmetic is correct). Except of course, it was quite like that. It was often a Sunday when many would say, "well, perhaps I'll take a Sunday off and attend to something here or there… perhaps. Nobody will miss me because, well, we're over there in [name your parish]."

Two years ago this all changed and we agreed to have four UBSs each year, only on the fifth Sundays. There were a few raised eyebrows and a few mutterings, but two years on, it seems to be working. Attendance is up at the united gatherings and, even more importantly, there is a buzz of togetherness and a sense of unity that was probably always there, but hidden away a bit.

The most recent UBS—at Burrowbridge—was a coincidence of three things. First it was a UBS, of course, but also it was the Patronal Festival of St Michael and All Angel's at Burrowbridge, and finally it was Burrowbridge's Harvest Festival. Two festivals at once. And what do you do at festivals? You feast. And, my how we feasted. Burrowbridge is renowned for its coffee and cakes, of course, but the ploughman's lunch we were all served was sheer delight. Not simply the food, but the conversation, the presence of so many, some of whom are less regular members of the congregation.

We heard in the service how we can be thankful for so much in our lives, and one of those things was clearly the thanks we give to God for our fellowship. Thank you to all at Burrowbridge who made the morning and lunch such a warm and nourishing time.





Monthly Market at the Coronation Hall

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

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Lyng

Open the Archives



When we are born someone writes our name in a register. When we marry we sign our name in a register to prove it happened.



When we die someone makes sure this final moment of our lives is recorded. There are forms and registers associated with so many important moments of our lives.

On **Saturday 19th October**, between 10am and 4pm you are invited to visit St Bartholomew's, Lyng, to peruse the registers, records and certificates associated with the long history of the parish. The church as it now stands is relatively recent (in terms of English Christianity), going back a mere seven or eight centuries, but there has been a place of Christian worship on the site sine Anglo-Saxon times. Not all of this history will be on display on 19th October, but many centuries of "Hatch-Match-Dispatch" will be found in the books being obtained for one day only from the Somerset Records Office.

Refreshments will be available. Donations to the good cause of the church can be made. And there will be people on-hand to guide you through the records on offer.

Please bring white cotton gloves if you have a pair. If not, we can provide!



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.

200 Club winners

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



Music at The Parish Church

At 7.30pm on Saturday 12th October, we welcome back Taunton Military Wives Choir for a "Celebrating Music" concert of songs and tales from life in the forces. Their music director is Ed Goater, who directs Taunton Choral Society. Within the choir there are wives and girlfriends of both serving and retired military personnel, mothers, sisters and daughters, also several ladies who have served in the armed forces themselves. They celebrate a love of singing and a communal understanding that comes from their shared experiences.

Standard ticket price of £15. Places are offered at all our concerts for accompanied under-12s without charge. Doors open at 7pm.

Winners on Sunday 1st September:

1st Pat Lander, 2nd Michael Spearpoint, 3rd Ralph Roberts

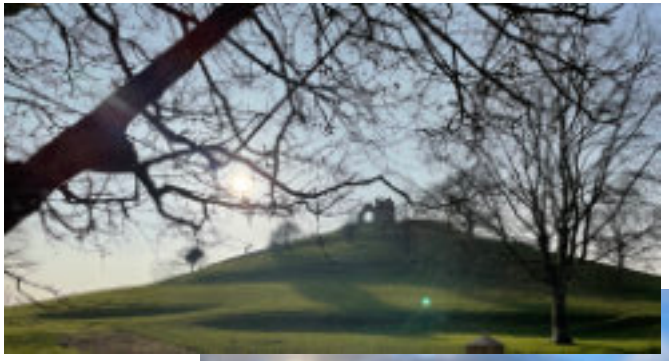
Wetlands in Winter

By Sonia Swinburne



An acquired taste? Such as asparagus, oysters?
A level landscape where the prongs from grotesque
boles point upward to the sepia skies.
No pussy footed willows these! Destined for
wingless bats, defence of padded shins.
Dwarfed grey stone bridges span the reens,
sheltering elvers, frogs and native snakes.
Coots, moorhens, herons, swans patrol the reeds.
Bulrushes, teazels, flags defy the threats
of hoar frost on the grassy banks.

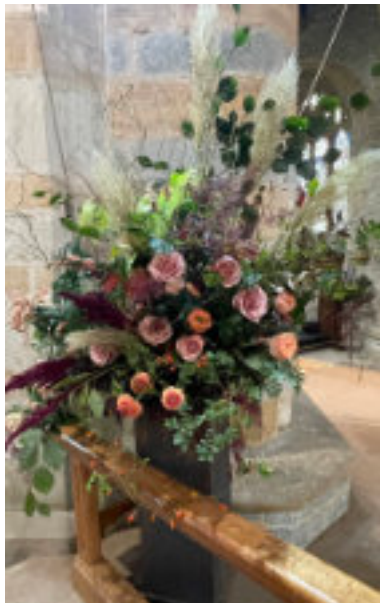
Lift up your eyes to glimpse a tower topped mump.
Seek out low lying farmsteads where sour apple
orchards summon wassailers. Warm cockles with
a draught of scrumpy and admire the scope of
osiers woven into tactile basketry.
Shrouded in mist and crossed by neolithic tracks
the peat preserves dug-out canoes, imported axe heads
bartered goods. Alfred was here, his wraith informs
my own identity. We should endeavour to conserve
the lambent legacy of our Wetlands' inheritance.





Wedding Preparations

By Zillah Sykes



Gradually the soft light of dawn began to break through the darkness and in the cool of the early morning a lone blackbird began to sing softly, as if to gently awaken the dawn. Then as the sun's rays chased away the shadows of night it sang with full voice, joyfully proclaiming the arrival of spring and the abundance of new life that accompanied it. On and on it sang and as if heeding its Creator's call to be fruitful and multiply, its song became a song of love.

The sound of its song drifted in through Georgia's partially opened bedroom window. Normally asleep at this early hour, she unexpectedly found herself wide awake, quite unable to sleep. As she listened to the blackbird's song without words she found there an echo in her own heart; of worship and wonder and of hope overflowing for the new season about to dawn in her own life. Soon a robin added its cheerful notes to welcome the new day and a group of sparrows began to cheep in chorus while Georgia, serenaded by these little songsters, drifted off into a restful sleep and slept soundly until she was awakened by her mother's gentle knocking on her bedroom door. Angela placed a mug of very welcome coffee beside Georgia's bed and opening the curtains, peered out anxiously at the new day. The air was cool and still and soft sunlight filtered through a layer of thin cloud. In the garden the pear tree was in full and tender leaf and daisies were scattered over the lush green grass. Above her a pair of collared doves cooed softly, cooed gently. The words of a morning prayer came easily to mind and she spoke them out softly,

"Blessed are you, Creator of all, to you be praise and glory forever. As your dawn renews the face of the earth, bringing light and life to all creation, May we rejoice in this day you have made…." It would indeed be a day of rejoicing.

"It's going to be a lovely day!" she assured her daughter. "The best!" agreed Georgia dreamily and as she sipped her coffee she rested her eyes in delight upon the glorious dress that hung upon her wardrobe door. She had chosen a sleeveless gown of white satin with a scooped neckline, a fitted bodice with an A line skirt, all overlaid with fine tulle embellished with delicate lace. A fine tulle veil hung beside it. "My dream dress!" she told herself, thrilled that she would be wearing it today.

Leaving Georgia to her dreams and then her bath Angela went downstairs to prepare breakfast. There on the table Georgia had placed the list of all that was planned for the morning – all timed precisely. Angela smiled to herself. They

had made so many lists in the last few weeks as they had planned and prepared for this day, anxious that nothing and no-one should be overlooked. As she began her breakfast she glanced at the list which began:

9 am: Amber to be collected by Mary. Amber their springer spaniel would have her own special day with Mary's two retrievers when they would play happily together all day in her large garden and completely tire one another out. Georgia had thought it would be lovely to have Amber at the wedding as she considered her to be an important part of the family- and especially as the church was welcoming to dogs- but her mother was firmly of the opinion that weddings and springer spaniels were not at all compatible and crossed her off the list, which continued:

10am. Tina arrives to fix Georgia's hair and make-up. The florist was scheduled for 10.30am just before the arrival of the bridesmaids, Emma aged 9 and Beth, aged 7 with Jane, Angela's sister and Tim, her husband. Half an hour later Georgia's college friends Katy and Molly, her maids of honour, were expected. That would give them all plenty of time to get ready before the final arrival at noon.

DADDY ARRIVES!!! Georgia had capitalised this entry and had added a generous amount of exclamation marks. She had so wanted her father to take his part as father of the bride and to give her away. They had always been close and had remained so, despite the divorce four years earlier.

Naturally Angela's experience had contrasted sharply with that of her daughter. She had felt the pain of rejection very keenly and had bitterly grieved the loss of all that she had held dear. Thankfully Tony had been generous with the divorce settlement and she had been able to leave London for the peace and quiet of the countryside. She had settled into the village but despite the beauty of her surroundings the peace that she had sought continued to elude her.

Then one Sunday morning as the church bells rang out their invitation to worship, Angela found herself responding to their call. Entering the church porch she pushed open the heavy oak door and stepping into that sacred space immediately she felt enveloped in its peace.

There, Sunday by Sunday, she was reminded of all that Christ had suffered as he went to the cross and died that she might be forgiven and then receive the gift of eternal life. Then after confessing those things that she had done wrong she was able to receive that forgiveness, but knew that there was something more she had to do: to forgive as she had been forgiven. A hard thing to do, but as she began to let go of all the resentment and bitterness that she had harboured against the one who had treated her so unfairly, she found the peace that she had so longed for, along with a joy for life that she had not known before. Consequently, she had been able to agree to Georgia's plea for Tony's inclusion in her wedding and to her daughter's utter delight had invited him to her home where together they had planned and prepared for this special day.

The morning progressed pretty much according to plan. The bridesmaids, Emma and Beth, were dressed and ready first and both felt like princesses. They

were wearing dresses of white satin, with full skirts and a wide, pink sash tied at the back in a large bow. They wore white, silk flowers in their hair and silver sparkly sandals on their feet; in their excitement they danced and pirouetted all around Angela's tiny sitting room.

Meanwhile upstairs in the cottage bedrooms, amid a good deal of nervous anticipation the process of transformation continued. Molly had arrived wearing jeans, trainers and a T shirt, was now arrayed in a full length rose pink satin dress and was helping Katy into hers, while in the adjacent bedroom Georgia was fully attired in her wedding gown and gazing at her reflection in the mirror. There, looking back at her was the bride she had dreamed of becoming and that realisation caused her to glow with happiness. Tina her hairdresser had arranged her long auburn hair so that it fell in soft curls around her shoulders and to the tiara that Georgia was wearing she had fixed the veil that flowed demurely over her shoulders and down towards her waist. Her shoes were of white satin.

Katy popped her head around the bedroom door and exclaimed, "Wow! You look amazing!" while Angela who had been helping her daughter achieve this transformation, nodded, her eyes misting up. At this moment words failed her as she wondered how it was possible to feel joy and sorrow at exactly the same time?

"The prettiest bride I've ever seen!" added Jane, "and the happiest!" Then the bride gathered up her skirts and prepared to make her way down the stairs. Her father had arrived and she longed to be with him and for him to share her joy.

The few minutes that Tony had been waiting in Angela's little sitting room with Tim and his two girls had not been easy and he began, once again, to doubt the wisdom of his coming. Then his daughter had entered the room and in her usual delightful way had called his name and wrapped her arms around him. Then there was no longer any doubt in his mind; he had come for love of her; she was the sole purpose of his coming. They shared some precious moments together while they waited for Angela and Jane to finish dressing. It had been a busy morning for all of them.

When they were all gathered together, Angela wearing a dress and jacket in pink and cream with a wide brimmed matching hat and her sister in an outfit of pale blue, the bouquets and posies were distributed and Angela's sitting room became a kaleidoscope of beauty and colour, of happiness and smiles, of excitement and of nerves.

The church clock chimed. "A quarter to one!" announced Tony, and to the bride, "Are you ready?" Georgia nodded. Taking her hand he led her out of the cottage into the bright freshness of the May day and to the unexpected smiles and good wishes of waiting neighbours. Then the bridal party slowly processed towards the church and Georgia, like generations of village brides before her, confidently stepped out full of hope and expectation for the future that lay ahead of her.

NORTH CURRY

Remembrance service Sunday 10th November: The annual Remembrance Sunday Service will be held on Sunday 10th November starting at 10:40am gathering around the War Memorial. Residents of Queen Square and Church Road are kindly reminded to ensure that any vehicles are clear of the War Memorial from 10:15am to 11:30am on the day. We look forward to seeing plenty of you there as usual.

Community speed watch team- volunteers needed: The Community Speed Watch Team do a wonderful job of helping to tackle speeding in the Parish, but they are always in need of volunteers! If you are one of the many that are rightly concerned about speeding, maybe you could volunteer some of your time to help tackle the problem with the Team. They can't operate without volunteers so please consider getting involved.

Winter fuel payment: If you're one of the 110,000 people across Somerset who will be affected by the withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Payment you may be struggling to heat your home this winter. You may be entitled to claim additional Pension credits. The best website to start is www.ageuk.org.uk and search for pension credit or call the Community Council Village Agents on 01823 331222 for practical advice. The Village Agent for North Curry is Tina Talbot, and you can email her at tinat@somersetrcc.org.uk or call her on 07947 902712.

Foster families desperately needed: Sadly, there are currently more than 600 children in care in Somerset – and fewer than 200 in-house foster carers. Almost anyone can be a foster carer – you just need to be over 21 with a spare room in your home; full training, support, and weekly payments are provided. For more information on fostering, visit fosteringinsomerset.org.uk or call 0800 587 9900. You're not committing to anything by getting in touch to find out more, and you could change a child's story.

Illegal parking: This is another reminder for people to be mindful of where they are parking; we've had several reports of cars still parking on the Pavement outside Cricket Cottages, parking here is illegal as it is still next to double yellow lines and is causing an obstruction to wheelchair users and parents pushing prams. Please don't be the cause of these residents having to walk on the road as the pavement is impassable.

Reminder to keep drains clear: As we are coming up to the season of rain and possible flooding, can we please ask everyone to do their bit and keep an eye on drains. If you notice a drain is blocked with leaves, we would be really grateful if you could clear it to ensure the drains can work effectively. Maybe pick a drain near you and keep an eye on it!

The Parish Council Office opening hours are:

Wednesdays 10:00am – 1:00pm
Thursdays 1:00pm – 4:00pm
Telephone No: 01823 490136 or parishcouncil@northcurry.com

Parish Council Diary for October 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.

The North Curry Calendar 2026



The Calendar, which is created by the Parish Church and sold through the Post Office, needs fresh photographers to ensure that the quality of the calendar is maintained and that it appeals to the whole village community. You do not need to be involved in any way with the church in order to submit images for consideration!

I have been invited to oversee the production of the 2026 Calendar and I hope that very much, as a resident of the village and/or a recent entrant to the Village Flower Show Photography Section, you can be persuaded to make some images over the next 10 months for submission to the Selection Panel by next August.

We would like local landscape and architecture photos, images documenting village residents going about their daily business, and images of village events. Please bear in mind the following points:

1 All images must be submitted as digital files by email and must be in landscape format i.e the picture base must be longer than the height. If using a mobile phone that means taking the picture with the phone turned 'on its side'!

2. Most mobile phone/cameras nowadays produce images far larger than three megabytes. This however is the absolute minimum to enable sharp, clear images for printing the calendar.

3. I am publicising these dtails at this early stage as we need images for each of the 12 months in the year with photos shot in Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer. Snow, frost, autumn leaves, wind, rain, low-light, fog/mist and sun are all eminently 'photo-friendly' conditions! Photos of village events may be less climatically dependent, although 'atmosphere' can help!

4. We shall endeavour (assuming photographic 'quality' is present) to include the work of as many village photographers as possible. We need 14 images and you may submit as many images as you wish.

5. The name of the photographer will be published with each selected image.

Please contact me if you would like any further information. Full details of entry dates, email addresses etc will be published in the Spring and Summer 2025 in The Pink Paper, on posters throughout the village, in the Benefice Magazine and on NextDoor. I shall however open a 'Calendar Storage File' on my hard drive, so if you would like to 'park' a particular image in the course of the year then just email it to me.

Happy Snapping! Good Luck! And let's make the 2026 Calendar the best yet!

Colin Trim, colinhtrim@gmail.com, 01823 490337

Weddings across the benefice

There have been ten weddings in the benefice this year. It is such a delight to marry couples and we are blessed with beautiful churches in which to do it.

It is always excited when people wish to have their marriage recognised in Church with a "solemn" ceremony. Solemn means to take something serious, properly, intentionally, and to be part of that occasion is a wonderful thing and joyful!

We continue to give thanks to God for all these couples, and prayer for their love for each other.

Kirsty & Tom	Stoke St Gregory	May 25th
Laura & Craig	North Curry	July 13th
Kate & Jack	North Curry	July 13th
Flora & Joe	North Curry	July 20th
Shana & Bob	Stoke St Gregory	July 27th



Victoria & Philip	North Curry	July 31st
Jasmine & Guy	North Curry	Aug 10th
Laisha & Ross	North Curry	August 16th
George & Sarah	North Curry	Sept 7th
Kyla & Kristian	Stoke St Gregory	Sep 21st

North Curry and District Amateur Gardeners



We are enthusiastic gardeners from North Curry and nearby who meet on the first Friday from September to May at 7:45pm in North Curry Village Hall. Invited speakers entertain us on a variety of gardening- related topics. Refreshments and a chat round off the evening.
In the summer months we visit gardens near and far together, hiring a coach for those further away.

There's something for everyone with an interest in gardening and plants.
New members and visitors are always welcome (membership £12 annually, visitors £3.00/visit).

Need more info? Telephone Sue on 01823 491658 or email northcurrygardeningclub@gmail.com

The Art of Dishevelment, with Charles Chesshire

Friday November 1st, 7.45pm for 8pm, North Curry Village Hall

After a lifetime of travelling the world designing gardens, studying plants, writing and teaching, Charles has settled near Bridport in Dorset where his garden design business is based alongside his rare plant nursery. Charles has been curator of Burford House Gardens and consultant to Sudeley Castle and Sezincote Gardens in Gloucestershire.

This talk is a personal, and occasionally tongue-in-cheek, exploration of the levels of control we assert over our gardens, taking a tour through the garden from perfect order to anarchy, a journey that is part psychological, part historical and part political.



NORTH CURRY **F I L M** CLUB



On Saturday Oct 12, we open our season of "Winter Warmers" with an enjoyable film Local Hero, from 1983 with Burt Lancaster, Denis Lawson & Peter Capaldi. An American oil company has plans for a new refinery and sends someone to Scotland to buy up an entire village, but things don't go as expected. Our "Winter Warmers" aim to lift your spirits and this one is bound to do that – it's set in Scotland! We have an intermission for homemade cake, tea (donation requested) and a chat. Entry is £5.

On Wednesday Oct 23, in complete contrast, we are showing Till, set in the deep south USA in 1955. After Emmett Till is murdered in a brutal lynching, his mother vows to expose the racism behind the attack while working to have those involved brought to justice. It's a strong, moving true story.

Membership to see 12 films is £30. Come along and join up!

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.

We are looking for help running the club. In particular, someone to train as a projectionist, but all offers of help are very welcome. Contact Don on 490 859.

Stoke St Gregory



The North Curry Mummers Return to Our Community Hub!

Exciting News! 26th December at 12pm in the Village Square, The Royal Oak Stoke St Gregory.

By popular demand, we are thrilled to welcome back the incredibly talented North Curry Mummers, to our Award Winning Community Hub at the Royal Oak. Join us for an unforgettable Christmas afternoon of lively folk theatre, humour, music, and community spirit, (yes the bar will be open).

Date: 26th December, Time: 12 noon

Location: The Mummers' traditional play is filled with laughter, colourful characters, and fun for all ages. Whether you're familiar with the ancient art of mumming or experiencing it for the first time, this will be a seasonal Christmas afternoon to remember, whatever the weather, come prepared!

What are the Mummers?

For those new to mumming, the North Curry Mummers bring to life a centuries-old tradition of folk plays, often performed around festivals and holidays, Boxing Day/St Stephen's Day. These comedic performances feature a mix of local legends, sword fights, magical cures, and heroes returning from battle. Expect humorous interactions, plenty of audience participation, and a festive day that captures the essence of village life and folklore.

What to expect:

A captivating performance by the North Curry Mummers

Traditional folk music and entertainment

A chance to mingle with friends, family, and neighbours.

Tickets: Admission is Free! There will be a collection for a local Charity. Be sure to reserve your spot by arriving early.

Come along, bring your loved ones, and celebrate the joy of community traditions! See you there!



Talking Cafe

(INC. CARERS GROUP)

Stoke St Gregory

The Village Shop & Cafe at The Royal Oak, TA3 6EH

When?

Every 2nd Thursday of the month

10am - 12 noon



somerset village & community agents
part of CCS





WHY POP IN?

Talking Cafes are great if you are looking for help and advice on important issues such as:

- caring for another
- housing
- health
- finance
- help with food/cooking
- adult social care
- children's services
- feelings of loneliness and isolation
- anything else that is worrying you.



Meet your local Village Agent and other support services.

www.somersetagents.org/talkingcafes

A service provided by: CCS

Funded by: Somerset Council; Somerset Integrated Care System

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Available from 11.30 to 3.30pm
Wednesday to Friday. 11.30 to 1.30pm Saturday

Option 1
Selection of homemade cakes, scones,preserves, clotted cream tea or coffee £8.50

Option 2
As Option 1 plus a selection of sandwiches £11.50

Add a Little Fizz
Prosecco with either Option
Small bottle £4.00
Large £10

Minimum Booking 2 People



Please pre-book with at least 24hrs notice. Parties must all have option 1 or 2, no combinations.
Email Jo: bownjoanne@gmail.com, Facebook or call in the shop
Village Shop & Cafe Stoke St Gregory

Stoke St Gregory WI

The October meeting of Stoke St Gregory WI will have 2 owls as visitors with their handler Anna Read.

Vicki Fielding is giving the vote of thanks. Jackie Daniels and Barbara Parsons are the tea hostesses,



Karen Housego is on the Trade stall and Belinda Morgan is arranging the rose bowl.

We will then be looking forward to a variety of Christmas related events including a craft morning run by Karen Veck on Thursday 10th October

Visitors and new members are always welcome! Contact Amelia Holt, 01823 490401 or 07985317252 for further details.



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 (Lyng, 9.15am), Thu (BB) and Fri (NC). All are welcome.

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NEW: enquire about our sumptuous **AFTERNOON TEAS**

Pizza



Upcoming dates Mon 2nd October. Enjoy a take-home pizza, or why not join us in the pub and enjoy some company and a drink with it. Bring the family!

Hints of Autumn

By Ian Upshall

After a somewhat disappointing summer, weather-wise, it is quite noticeable how the evenings are drawing in and the breeze carries with it a hint of colder climes. It always seems to me that it takes forever for the evenings to draw out in the Spring but dark evenings arrive with the sound of the new-term school bell.

I've noticed recently the very first indications of autumn. As I was driving over the moor, the willow along Moor Road is beginning to take on a yellow hue. And the grass is growing again! In Stoke, we have a few small community green spaces and it is fast approaching the time when we need to gather volunteers and undertake some autumnal housekeeping. The orchard has been very productive this year (I have heard others speak of disappointing harvests) and we are now clearing the area of the grass which we allowed to grow from May onwards. It will be interesting to see the result of minimal intervention and the success (or otherwise) of our extensive wild-flower planting.

The Spinney, which comprises over 100 trees, continues to provide a great habitat for small creatures, birds, butterflies and moths. But even as we pursue a policy of minimal intervention, a little tidying is required. The goose grass proliferates in this environment as does the bind weed – but both are great food sources for smaller invertebrates.

SEG continues to identify opportunities for increasing our green spaces. It is an irony that, whilst we live in the middle of the countryside, the children and adults in our communities have possibly fewer accessible green spaces than those living in urban areas. Much of the land is farmed and, for good reason, is not freely accessible. So we continue to look for places where we can let nature do its thing, enable us all to learn about how the environment develops and how it supports the myriad of life. Unfortunately, these days, there are precious few places like this

After a summer break, SEG was hoping to join Somerset Wildlife Trust and Somerset Bat Group to run a 'Bat Detective' evening. This was to be a repeat of last year's event but unfortunately, the weather wasn't kind to us this year and we had to cancel. We will try again next year – apologies to those of you who booked to attend.

The Bat Detective event is a great example of citizen science in action. There are many schemes in the local area that rely on support from ordinary people, collecting data, making observations or taking samples. The more information, or data, on a particular topic, the better the analyses can be. Weather it be counting and identifying bats, taking water samples, counting trees or identifying moths, there are plenty of ways to get involved. These data are used for a multitude of outcomes from the provision of new habitats, identifying sources of pollution or providing food sources.

Further from home, in the news this week was the announcement that scientists have finally determined the cause of seismic signals that were recorded all over the world for a period of nine days in 2023. It was due to the melting of a glacier in a remote fjord in Greenland. The landslide began when a 1.2km-high mountain peak collapsed into the fjord, unleashing a 200m-tall wave through the narrow waterway. Fortunately, no one was hurt or property damaged but this event clearly tells us two things: scientists using a range of highly sophisticated equipment and analytical techniques can detect relatively small changes in our environment, and; climate change, the warming of the artic sea in this case, is having a range of highly destructive effects. It is, once again, clear and irrefutable evidence, as if we need it, of the impact of climate change. All of us in the prosperous so-called 'first world' contributed to this single event – a tiny impact, admittedly. But if we continue to make tiny changes to our lifestyle, reduce carbon emissions, waste, and protect the environment from deterioration then added up, we can all make a discernible improvement.

For too long it has been convenient to say that one's impact on the environment is so small as to be almost inconsequential. That is a 'head-in-the-sand' statement and we must apply our amazing human resources such as intelligence, ingenuity, skills, and respect to make changes for the good. However small these changes appear in isolation, over time and if everyone were to make small changes , the accumulated effect will be massive.

A day or so prior to writing this piece, we heard about the first 'amateur' space walk made by fare-paying astronauts. Whatever our personal views on the impact of flying people into space, I did think the words uttered by Jarred Isaacson, the first person out of the hatch of the SpaceX Polaris Dawn, was appropriate. Whilst these words are unlikely to become as famous as Neil Armstrong's as he stepped onto the moon, they are nevertheless important.

"… back at home we all have a lot of work to do, but from here, Earth sure looks like a perfect world." We do indeed have a lot of work to do to continue to live, prosper and ensure equality and opportunity for all.

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.



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Pilates

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East Lyng Village Hall: Wed 7.30pm, Thu 6.30pm
Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall: Mon 11am, Wed 6pm

Vinyassa Flow Yoga

Middlezoy Village Hall Wed 11am

Details of other classes in the local area at www.emzpilates.co.uk
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Rotas

North Curry

	Sidesmen	Intercessions	Readers
6th Oct	L Farnham, L Paul	D Farnham	M Cridge
13th Oct	H Comrie, J Sergeant	H Griffiths	J Satchwell
20th Oct	Denise Walker	D Walker	D Akerman, M Piers
27th Oct	H Comrie, P Burgess	M Piers	A Peters
3rd Nov	J Sergeant, T Jeanes	H Griffiths	T Jones

Lyng

Cleaning

2nd	Sue Dare and Jenny Barnstable
9th & 16th	Di James and Ruby Barrington
23rd & 30th	Alison Perry and Angie Martin

Flowers

7th	Christine Dawson
14th & 21st	Angie Martin
28th	Alison Perry

Stoke St Gregory

Sidespersons

6th Oct	Barbara P & John
20th Oct	Alex and Sally M
27th Oct	Annette and Barbara M
3rd Nov	Barbara P and John

Readers

Please read both Old and New Testament readings as shown in the bulletin. If changing weeks please advise Jane or Pat

6th Oct	Harvest: TBC
20th Oct	Sally
27th Oct	Annette
3rd Nov	Various (school et al.)

Cleaners

6th Oct	Simon and Penny
13th Oct	Linda and Brett
20th Oct	Marilyn and Terri
27th Oct	Annette and Martin
3rd Nov	Dave and Janet

Flowers

13th Oct	Amelia Holt
20th Oct	Cherry Dobson
3rd Nov	Sue Hembrow (Poppies)

Services across the Benefice

6th October Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
10.00am	Lyng	Eucharist
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family worship service with communion
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Harvest Eucharist
11.00am	NC & C Methodist	Service

13th October Twentieth Sunday after Trinityv

8.30am	Stoke St Gregory	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Burrowbridge	Service of the Word
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.00am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church starting with breakfast
11.00am	NC & C Methodist	Service

20th October Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
10.00am	Lyng	Service of the Word
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family worship service
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11.00am	NC & C Methodist	Service of Holy Communion
6.00pm	North Curry	Evensong

27th October Bible Sunday

9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.30am	Stoke Baptists	Family worship service
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11.00am	NC & C Methodist	Service

3rd November All Saints'/All Souls' Sunday

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
10.00am	Lyng	Eucharist
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
10.00am	Stoke Baptists	Messy Church starting with breakfast
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11.00am	NC & C Methodist	Service
4.30pm	Burrowbridge	All Souls (United `Benefice)