The Athelney Magazine



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

November 2025

£1

Who's Who

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

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Churchwarden	Vacant	
Treasurer	Steve Loveridge	07808 656329, 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.

You can find the coffee mornings here:



Burrowbridge

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

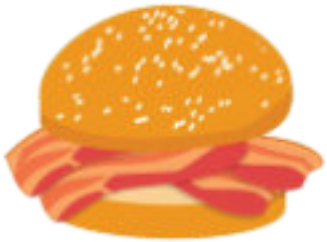
Lyng

Lyng Big Bart Breakfasts are held monthly on the third 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 November** for the December Magazine; Please note: **July and December are double months.**

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

Our printing costs have recently incresased owing to the general price increases of so many things. The annual subscrioption, therefore, will be increased accordingly. **Subscriptions this year (2025-2026) will be £10** and will run as usual from May to April. Please pay your deliverer the £10 requested.

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 £100, Half page £55. We no longer offer a quarter page. 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.

The Athelney Benefice



Lest we forget, right?



I don't expect any of you reading this to be surprised to discover that I am a pacifist. I don't hide my feelings regarding peace. It is a fundamental tenet of my Christian faith that I will seek peace in all regards. When I say during the Eucharistic Prayer, "The Peace of the Lord be always with you," I am not speaking flippantly or with disregard for the depth of Peace (note the "P") I am seeking. Peace is at the heart of who we are as Christians. It is not simply a word we throw around hoping it will land on someone and make a difference. The heart of Jesus's Good News is that we seek, in the Kingdom of God, the Peace of God. Jesus tells us, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:27). I say these words at many funerals and they are always alive on my lips.

I cannot speak for others, of course, but I do suspect that I am not alone in these sentiments. "Seek peace and pursue it," Peter encourages (1 Peter 3:11). It's there all through the Scriptures, and its deep within our culture. So much so that I cannot imagine any rational person turning away from Peace when they discover it. In a very broad sense, then, I would say that all rational beings are pacifists at heart. To be otherwise is nihilistic, verging on psychopathy. I don't want to upset anyone with these words, truly. Even so, sometimes there is no other way to get the message across.

Of course, seeking Peace and discovering it are two very distinct matters. And there's a third: holding onto it. Notice, in all these words there is a sense that Peace is "out there". We need to seek it, take hold of it, carry it with us when we have found it.

This hunt for peace is not easy. It takes time and effort. It requires a state of mind that is not always easy to maintain, and we are very good at throwing it away, dismissing Peace as though it can't be true, can't be real. We even ridicule those who think that Peace is possible. We suggest that those who truly think they can discover Peace are the fools, the idealists. I understand why: we are taught that our world is bloody in tooth and claw, that our natural lives are nasty, brutish and short. This seems to be a common theme right now, with wars and rumours of wars and wars that have been filling our media streams and memes. The world seems in a sick place and it is not surprising that we can find it difficult to think otherwise. Surely, humans are far too easily seduced into conflict, so what's the point of seeking Peace?

Ironically, that's just the point. Who said finding Peace was easy? Who said it was a passive matter? Who said that keeping peace was bound to happen? As we move through our November of Remembrance, the 80th since VE and VJ days, I want to offer a metaphor. We speak far too easily of "Lest we forget." After all, it is Remembrance, right? We forget too easily that Peace needs to be sought and held and cared for, carried gently. It is fragile and that is why it is so significant and difficult.

Peace is like one of those children's games of bagatelle with the small balls and the shallow pockets. You try to coax the ball into the indentation by sloping the game and momentarily the ball settles. Ah… Peace… You try to keep it there, but it falls out. Peace needs constant attention. Peace requires each of us to care for the Peace we find.

I am a member of a small group of "Peacebuilders Network". It is a Bath and Wells Diocesan initiative, a group of–mostly but not entirely–clergy who have been working for a few years to develop what could be described as a "Theology of Peace". Grand words for simply wishing to discover in each of us ways of getting the small balls into the pockets and keeping them there. We have worked with various church communities across the region to share some of our thinking, and–spoiler alert–its not rocket science. But it does take courage. The biggest act of courage is through faith: courage to listen and to absorb what someone is saying that might not seem peaceful. It takes courage because we all wish to have our say. After many discussions and much sharing, we recognise that "Being Peace" is a core principle. To "Be Peace" brings the ball bearing to a gentle pause and helps stabilise relationships. It then requires constant attention.



No. It isn't easy. And it doesn't just happen. But being the peace we wish for is essential if

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Sometimes I write benign pleasantries, other times I share what has been getting under my skin a little more. If you would like to respond to either, I am always interested, please let me know what thoughts in you my words elicit. vicar@athelneybenefice.com



Martin's Musings

A monthly observation on life by Revd Martin Mudie

'Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat, please put a penny in the old man's hat'.

It may seem an odd way of starting the November musings but in today's world, the preparations for Christmas seem to get earlier each year. I was in the Monkton Elm garden centre in September and, lo and behold, they were beginning to arrange their Christmas display. When I asked about it, two very good explanations were given. Firstly, it took a long time to put everything out and secondly, not so many plants are sold at that time of year, and iso t provides employment.

However, the tsunami of the commercial Christmas will soon be upon us. Our American friends are more fortunate as they have Thanksgiving (like our own Harvest) on the last Thursday in November. Thanksgiving keeps Christmas, quite rightly to December.

If I was a dictator, which I'm glad I'm not, nobody would be allowed to mention the C word until December. One month's bombardment of trying to persuade us to spend excess amounts of money, which we cannot really afford on things the recipients don't really want or need is quite enough. For if we get into the business of Christmas too early it means that when we arrive at December 25th the world has become a rather tired and dispirited place which devalues what the season should celebrate.

I remember as a child, when released from the horrors of boarding school, what the decorations in London, where my mother had a shop, the pure magic of that wonderful time of year. What would the decorations in Regent and Oxford Streets be like that year? The department stores like Selfridges and Harrods used to have a small ceremony for unveiling their celebration of the season.

People often say that Christmas is a magical time of year where they remember the simplicity and joy of a special part of their childhood. By commercialising it too much and too soon we are in danger of destroying that magic as much for ourselves as our children. Yet at a time of year when daylight and sunshine are in increasingly short supply, the lights and decorations do bring comfort to our spirits. I think the pagans were on to something in their feast of *Saturnalia*, which fell on December 25th, a few days after the winter solstice—those clever early Christians just nicked the date for Christmas. So, with that thought in mind, I think the period before December should be renamed 'Winterfest' and let Christmas tide be celebrated in December.

Let's walk int the light

By Rt Revd Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells



A story that's often told in our churches comes from the fourth chapter of John's Gospel. It tells of Jesus, in the blinding heat of midday meeting a Samaritan woman at the well in a town called Sychar. The woman is hoisting up heavy buckets of water in the hot sun. She's there because she's a woman with 'a reputation' and it's the only time of day she can avoid the muttering of her neighbours who meet at the well at cooler hours. (Read more in John 4)

In an extraordinary encounter, Jesus sees deep into the woman's heart. Through their conversation Jesus brings about her healing and restoration into the community from which she is estranged. It's a story of life, possibility, new beginnings and forgiveness.

The woman at the well is not the only Biblical story set in Sychar. There's another, contained in the 34th chapter of the Book of Genesis. This is a tale of terror that's never heard in our churches; the rape of a girl called Dinah. It's a dark, nasty tale of violence that wrecks the life of individuals, families and the entire community. So we don't speak about it. We keep it hidden.

Sometimes people say to me of safeguarding 'It's just a tick box exercise', an onerous compliance requirement. Rather I would say that our work in safeguarding asks fundamental questions about the kind of places we want our churches to be. Just like the Bible passages I've mentioned, we can be places of hiddenness, silence, and hurt. Or places of life, new beginnings and restoration.

Accounts like the Makin review have shone light on our story. We've also been working hard to bring about change. While we cannot be complacent, I am intensely proud of all that was revealed about safeguarding in Bath and Wells by our independent audit that happened earlier this year. This told us that we are moving towards a much better story. So let's build on the momentum we have created.

Let's walk into the light.

DIOCESE OF
Bath&Wells
Living and telling the story of Jesus

Caring for and loving each other



Safeguarding Sunday on 16th November invites us to recognise all those who work hard to keep others safe.

It also acknowledges the role we all play in safeguarding. This shared commitment was highlighted in the recent Independent Safeguarding Audit undertaken in Bath and Wells.

Reflecting on the positive outcome of the audit, Ben Goodhind, Safeguarding Manager for Bath and Wells says, "The audit was really good at identifying areas we can improve in. But primarily, it said we're on the right track with the work we are doing."

Ben explains how the Bath and Wells Safeguarding team has developed and is now more responsive to the needs of churches in 2025. "There's now a variety of skills and backgrounds among staff, good-quality training for volunteers, and clear guidance on running events safely for children."

Ben says this year's Safeguarding Sunday theme, 'Actions Speak Louder than Words', feels timely. "Safeguarding is about caring for and loving each other and there is so much the church can do to help local communities thrive, especially when times are tough. If we all play our part, in awareness, in compassion, and in action, that's when safeguarding truly works."

With that in mind, Ben is planning to focus on domestic abuse in 2026. He says, "The vast majority of referrals into the team are now about adults, often about domestic abuse, sometimes involving dementia or parents experiencing violence from their children. These are big issues in wider society, not just the church.

"I feel that equipping people in the right way means we can provide support within our communities. The church can and is doing positive things. We can build on that. Following the audit, we can have more confidence in how we are working and look at an ambitious plan for 2026.

Find information and resources about at safeguardingsunday.org

Burrowbridge



A new fence... at last!

After many months of to-ing and fro-ing with various statutory bodies, after being told we'd have to spend an awful lot of our funds on an archaeological investigation, after deciding that was a waste of our funds… at last! We have a lovely new fence to replace the crumbly and dangerous concrete block wall that fell over during 2023.

Thank you to Julie and Sue for their tenacity, to Roger for his wise advice and to Dan Taylor for doing the work. The new fence will keep the sheep out and is unlikely to fall over any time soon.

Who knew a perimeter could be so taxing?! We do now!



All Souls, Sunday November 2nd at 5pm

All are welcome to St Michael's for our annual "All Souls" service. All Souls is when we remember those we have loved by see no more.

You might have lost a friend or family member recently, or perhaps many years ago. This service is an opportunity to recall, quite literally, their life and relationship to you. The names of those we remember will be read aloud, and we will pray and give thanks to God for their lives.

Each of our other three churches will have read the names for their parish earlier in the day. This service in Burrowbridge is a time to name those special to Burrowbridge and also from across the benefice.

If you would like the name of a loved one read out, please either add their name to the lists in any of the churches, or simply come along at 5pm on November 2nd and let us have their name.



Lyng

Christmas Fayre: Change of Plan!

For a variety of reasons we have decided to postpone the Christmas Craft Fayre planned for November 15th and move it far closer to Christmas, combining the event with our "Al Fresco" Carol singing. For the past few years we have gathered outside the church during the week before Christmas to sing carols then to move indoors for some refreshments. This year will be the same *except* we will also have a few craft stalls along with cakes, mince pies and mulled wine!



Also, remembering...

The first Sunday of November is when we traditionally remember those who we have loved but who have died. We will do this in our November 2nd 9.30am service, of course. But there will also be an opportunity to make a small Christmas decoration mentioning their name at the craft stalls and place this on the Church's Christmas tree. In this way we can continue to remember and recall.



Lyng Parish Council

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

Dates of next Parish Council meetings:

- Monday 10th November 2025, 7.30pm
- Monday 12th January 2026, 7.30pm

The agendas and minutes of previous meetings are published on the parish website: lyngparish.square.site

The parish clerk, Mrs Helen Barrington, can be contacted via email lyngpc1@outlook.com or Tel: 01823 490391.

Harvest thankfulness

By Alison and Angie, Churchwardens



As the season of Harvest draws to a close, we're still basking in the glow of our recent Harvest Supper in Lyng. It was a truly special evening, filled with warmth, laughter and community spirit.

We'd like extend our sincere thanks to the Village Hall Committee for generously allowing us to use the hall free of charge. Their kindness and support made it possible for us to host the even and focus on bringing everyone together.

A huge thank you also goes to Geoff, who ran the bar with great cheer and efficiency through the evening. Your efforts kept the drinks flowing and the spirits high—we're so grateful!

To all the residents who came along, thank you for making the night so memorable. Your generosity helped raise an incredible £310 for Bridgwater Food Bank, a cause that truly matters. Every donation, every raffle ticket and every helping hand made a difference.

Special thanks to the talented ladies who decorated the hall so beautifully and prepared the delicious chutney—and those who adorned the church with stunning floral arrangements, capturing the spirit of the season perfectly.

We'd also like to thank Revd Simon and Revd Martin for leading such a lovely Harvest Worship in the church. Their thoughtful words and warm presence set the tone for a meaningful celebration and reminded us all of the deeper significance of the season.

It is moments such as these that remind us of what makes our village so special. Thank you for showing up, pitching in and proving once again that when we come together we cab do great things.

Bridgwater Foodbank
Together with Trussell

Remembrance in Lyng

All Souls

The first Sunday of November is traditionally a time to remember those who we loved but who have died and we see no longer. This is the festival of All Souls. At Lyng this service will be held at 9.30am. If you would like to come along and take time to remember your loved ones, then all are welcome to this informal service of peaceful reflection.

If you would like to add the name of your loved one to the list of names read out during the service, please contact Alison Perry, office@athelneybenefice.com. It does not matter how recently or distantly your loved one died. What matters is that we remember them.

Act of Remembrance

We will be holding a short act of remembrance at St Bartholomew's at the eleventh hour on November 11th.

There is no Remembrance on the Sunday before, although if you wish you are very welcome to attend St Michael's in Burrowbridge at 10.30am.

In this 80th Anniversary of the ending of World War Two it is all the more poignant to remember the need for peace.



As we seem poised always on the edge of conflict, we need to find time to prayer for peace. We need to see ourselves as "being" the peace we wish to find.

We will gather at 10.45am on 11th November at the church.



Community Lunches

Held on the first Wednesday of each month.

Excellent food and fellowship, £7/person.

Next lunches are: Wednesday 5th Nov: Bangers and Mash and Wednesday 3rd Dec: A Festive Christmas lunch!

To book a place text to 07860 135751

Village Hall Community Garden Project

by

The village hall garden project has been underway for six months. Here is an update on the progress made towards the initial project outcomes.



Accessible paths

Following community consultation, we decided to build an ecological and sustainable "hoggin" path, similar to those used by the National Trust. After researching costs, materials, and maintenance, several workshops were organised to take things forward. Local businesses have supported the effort through discounts and donations of materials and equipment. Volunteers from 12 years to 86 years built the path: great example of team work! The completed path was unveiled at a community lunch and successfully tested by elderly and wheelchair-using residents. We all think it looks lovely and has made access access to the garden so much easier.

Raised beds



Following completion of the path, we moved on to build and install two large wooden planters. Once again, local suppliers helped out by providing compost and materials at good rates. There are three planters, all wheelchair accessible with one made from an adapted donated pallet box with a custom metal stand—this can be maintained by seated gardeners. There is also, now, a 30m growing border along the garden's boundary.

Vegetable Patch

With the raised beds all done, the we began developing a vegetable patch. Villagers donated seeds and plants and the volunteers were given a bit of training by an experienced team leader who had previously created successful permaculture gardens. Everyone learned about plant care, growth, and harvesting, as well as how to use future produce for community benefit. Donations have included raspberry bushes, tomato, melon, courgette, and cucumber plants, herbs, shrubs, and flowers.

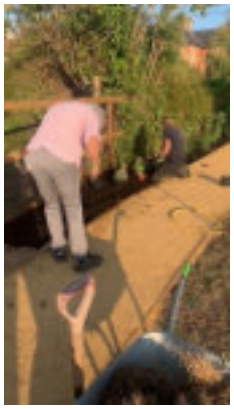
A separate training workshop was held for adults with learning difficulties from a nearby day care centre, where students planted and cared for sunflowers they had grown from seed. The group continues to visit



the garden to tend their plants. Additionally, a new "no-dig" border was created along the path using donated cardboard and soil, supporting the permaculture approach with more donated shrubs, fruit bushes, and vegetables. To define the space, a new post-and-rail fence was installed, marking the boundary between the village hall garden and the neighbouring property.

Fruit trees

The garden already contained damson, apple, and pear trees that had become overgrown and diseased, with fallen fruit left to rot. As part of the project we pruned the trees and treated them with nutrients, and cleared of weeds and brambles to improve light and air circulation. Everyone in the parish was consulted about adding new fruit trees, and it was agreed to plant them in late autumn–the optimal season for fruit tree planting. It has also been suggested that we organise a traditional Somerset wassailing event in January to bless the trees and encourage a good harvest was developed. Watch this space!



Next steps

The training workshops have continued regularly throughout the development of the project, with many volunteers consistently participating sharing news about how things are going at village hall events. In addition to planting and growing activities, second-hand garden furniture has been purchased and restored during a weekend upcycling workshop led by a retired carpenter. We sanded, painted, and treated the furniture, and the session inspired younger participants, particularly our 12-year-old volunteer who is interested in pursuing a construction-related career.

Watch out for future developments!

Future workshops will include:

- Care of plants and maintenance of garden
- Harvesting fruit and vegetables
- Bird box building and insect hotels
- Jam and chutney making
- Paving using bricks from a dilapidated wall
- Willow weaving to make an arch
- Permaculture talk from local garden centre

North Curry



North Curry Coffee Shop

By popular demand, our home made soup will be back on the menu from 14th October for just £4 including a roll, butter and croutons. Come in for a warming bowl or maybe a jacket potato or sandwich, followed perhaps by a slice of one of our famous home baked cakes or a cheese scone (declared to be the 'best in Somerset').

Our opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 4.30pm and 10am to 4pm on Sundays, with last orders 15 minutes before closing.

We have some Autumnal and Hallowe'en themed crafts on offer at the moment and then from 11th November, the shelves will be festooned with Christmas gifts and decorations, all supplied by local makers. Don't forget we also sell amazing jewellery and art, plus second hand books for £1 and a variety of cards for £2.50, and our stocks are refreshed regularly.

We are always looking for new volunteers so if you would like to join our friendly team, please email us at coffeeshop@north-curry.com or call us on 01823 491414. It's a great way to meet people while helping the community and raising money for your chosen charity.

We look forward to welcoming you.

200 CLUB

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. 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.

Winners

Sunday 5th October

1st John de Winton
2nd Gillian Quinn
3rd David Akerman

North Curry Neighbourhood Plan Informal Public Consultation: Please Read!



The North Curry Plan Steering Group have published their draft plan on the website (northcurry-plan.org) in late October 2025 and invite residents of the North Curry Parish to read it and make representations on it. This consultation will include a public meeting on November 10th 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. All residents of the parish are encouraged to attend. Although there will be a couple of hard copies available, it is advisable to read the document first as there will not be time to present it in full! There will be refreshments (inc wine!) available.

The draft plan will also have a record of the various surveys and consultations. Hard copies of the draft plan will be made available at the back of the Parish Church. There will also be feedback forms available.

After this informal consultation, having taken note of any comments, the group will submit the plan to Somerset Council for the Regulation 14 formal examination by an independent Examiner.

Web Site

The web site contains details of the steering group and minutes of meetings and current reports.

It also contains information about what a Neighbourhood plan can achieve. Please do take a look and join the consultation to help make sure North Curry remains a great place for everyone living, working, and visiting here in the future.

What is a neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory planning document prepared in consultation with all residents and other consultees to guide and inform decisions on planning applications made within the plan period affecting the plan area. If an adopted neighbourhood plan supports the use of land in the plan area for development, there is a presumption that a planning application consistent with the plan will be approved. If an adopted neighbourhood plan requires protection from certain forms of development, there is a presumption that such development will not be permitted.



North Curry and District Amateur Gardeners: Why not join us?

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.

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

North Curry Society Meeting Wednesday November 19th

Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Service

with Charlotte Humber



"Help us be there for people when they need us most", says Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Service. For 25 years, DSAA has been dedicated to providing life-saving care to those in need. Yet they don't receive a penny of direct government funding. Come and hear Supporter Engagement Officer Charlotte Humber explain what they do.

Doors at the Village Hall open 7.30pm for a hot drink and genial company before the talk starts at 8pm. Membership cards with the year's programme are available from the Treasurer (£15: you can join on the night). Visitors always welcome though, on payment of the £5 guest fee.

The Society generally meets on the third Wednesday each month to hear about aspects of local heritage. Our Chairman Colin Trim (01823 490337) would be pleased to learn about topics and speakers of interest to you.

NORTH CURRY **F I L M** CLUB



On Sat Nov 8th we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen (Dec 16th 1775) with the lovely version of Pride & Prejudice starring Keira Knightly & Matthew Macfadyean. It will be delightful.

The Village doors open at 2.30pm, with the film starting at 3pm. Entry £5. There's an intermission for tea and home-made cake (donation requested).

In contrast, on Wed Nov 26, we are showing the award-winning Japanese film Shoplifters. On the margins of Tokyo, a dysfunctional band of outsiders are united by loyalty, a penchant for petty theft and playful grifting. When the young son is arrested, secrets are exposed that upend their tenuous, below-the-radar existence. The film tells a touching story elegantly – filmmaking at its best.



The Village hall doors & bar open at 7pm, with the film starting at 7.30pm. Also open to guests (£5).

Do you know some teenagers doing the Duke of Edinburgh award? In the past we have had help from some teenagers, as part of the volunteering element of the award. It would be to put the chairs out for our "Winter Warmer" film showings. It would be just six Saturday afternoons during the winter, taking less than 30 minutes each time. Contact Don 01823 490 859, if you are able to help.

North Curry Organ Fund

Thank you to everyone who came along to the North Curry Church Organ recital last month. We heard a lovely selection of pieces from Patrick Rendell and Miles Quick and we raised over £600 towards the renovation fund. Thank you especially to Jenny Satchwell for organising the event and to everyone who helped with the refreshments, making it a lovely afternoon

The North Curry Calendar 2027

(yes... looking ahead...)

By Colin Trim, colinhtrim@gmail.com

The Village 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 2027 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 must be wider than the high. 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 details 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 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 2026 in The Pink Paper, on posters throughout the village, in the Benefice Magazine and on NextDoor. But please send me what you wish at any time before then.

Happy Snapping, Good Luck, and let's make the 2027 Calendar the best yet!

NORTH CURRY WI

By Olivia Spall

At our October meeting we were shocked and saddened to announce the sudden death of our long standing, much respected and loved member Mary Ginger. We held a minute's silence where we could remember her fondly and show our respects.

On a happier matter our speaker was Claire Hart who gave a lively account of how she and BBC gardener of the decade, Katherine Crouch prepared and erected a stand at RHS Chelsea in May 2013. With the opportunity of a stand in The Grand Pavillion for a seed company based in Coggeshall, Essex, and with a tight budget of only £13,000 they begged and borrowed equipment and components. Their determination and flair finally paid off when they achieved a Gold medal. It was a fascinating insight into the process of exhibiting at Chelsea.

We welcomed three visitors to the meeting and hope that they enjoyed the meeting and that others will follow their example.

Also in September we held a very successful MacMillan Coffee morning and were delighted to send £365.50 to the MacMillan Charity. Thank you to all who helped and supported making it such a success.

Anticipating our November meeting (on the 5th November) we look forward to welcoming Christina Strang who is a Graphologist specialising in handwriting analysis.

Amongst other things this expertise has led to her working with forensic teams for crime solving. We're wondering what she will find out about us if she analyses some of our handwriting. Who knows what she may find out!

We always welcome visitors and new members. We are a friendly group, and it really is a good way to get to know people and make friends. Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall at 2.00, usually comprising of a speaker, but we also have lots of celebrations! To put you more in the picture let me tell you that we very rarely sing 'Jerusalem' and while some of us do make jam (and cakes) it is not a competition!



If you would like more information, please do contact me on 07825 925775 or Barbara our President on 01823 490811. I look forward to hearing from you.

Bluegrass and Americana

North Curry Parish Church
November 21st at 7:30 pm

An evening filled with the distinctive sounds of the banjo, mandolin, guitar, and double bass, complemented by close harmony singing. This performance promises to deliver an authentic bluegrass experience and highlights the Trio's passion for Americana music. Tickets cost £15 available from the post office or on the door. Proceeds will go towards next year's Music Festival June 18th to 21st 2026





Dark nights: be seen!

It's the time of the year when it is dark soon after 4.00pm,. There are children getting off of school buses with dark cloths, others walking dogs or running. Please think about how visible you are. Remember to wear something light or, better, high viz. High viz velcro vest can be bought for under £2.00. Or get a roll of reflective tape to put of school bags and such like and share with your friends!

Head torches are fine for the one in front one but make sure everyone is illuminated if possible. And, all road users: please look out for one another.

Remembering Nick Zelle: the man who wasn't there

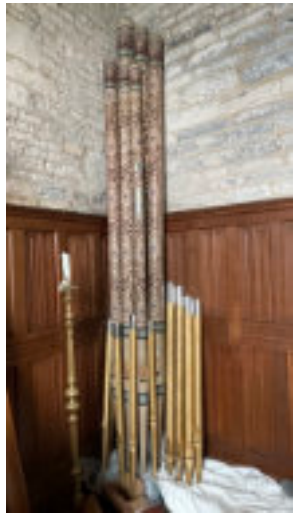
By Dave Patten



The recent recital on our new organ was notable for a significant absentee. One man made his mission in life through many years to bring about an improvement in the organ, but sadly has not lived to see the day, but for some of us he was there. That man was Nick Zelle who it is fair to say did not make himself popular with the succession of vicars from Michael Lewis onwards till his death twelve years ago. At one time he had the pipes of three organs stored at The Warren in White Street, all bought off eBay, and destined he hoped for the parish church.

There's no denying that he knew his music, having been a fervent promenader at the Royal Albert Hall, taught music at Claysemore School near Blandford and more notably at Groton in Massachusetts regarded as one of the top feeder schools for Harvard and Yale. He claimed to have introduced the tradition of English boy's choral music to New England.

While having a talent for classical music he also loathed jazz - "it's not music, should never be on Radio 3" and he was a frequent letter writer to the BBC always protesting about some imagined fault. Apart from vicars his other enemies included the Headmaster of Clayesmore who threw him out of the Old Boys group, and sadly his sister when they fought a battle over where his mother Enid should spend the last years of her life (she lived to be 105). When Nick died there were several memorable mentions from Old Boys who said that "he was one of the few teachers they remembered with fondness, as he let them smoke and watch TV in his flat."



He was devoted to Enid and visited her twice a day when she was in a care home in Taunton. It seems he wanted to look after her in North Curry, but her sister took out a court order retaining her in Taunton. Not content with this Nick "abducted" her one Christmas and brought her home to receive two policemen knocking on The Warren to find where she was. That story made the national press.

His grave in the churchyard bears the apt description, presumably written by his sister: "A challenge was music to his ears."



Church Cleaning Day—November 8th

After the great success of last time our beautiful Parish Church again needs your help with some regular maintenance/cleaning.

November 8th - 10am to 12 noon, and 2pm to 4pm

There are a variety of jobs to suit all ages and abilities! Dusting, polishing, tidying, gutter cleaning, ivy removal, bench cleaning…

Useful equipment to bring are gloves, dusters, long-arm dusters, brushes, sprays, secateurs, spades, ladders.

Why not make it a family affair, and let's all help to get the whole building sparkling and ready for Easter.

Every little thing helps, and refreshments will be provided.

We shall also be planting daffodil bulbs throughout the churchyard. The bulbs have been purchased through your kind donations and coordinated by Mary Piers. Thank you, everyone!

Welcome to the new ABC

by The Vicar



Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, Archbishop (designate)

After a lengthy process, at last we can welcome our new Archbishop of Canterbury! The Church of England cannot be hurried… but we are relieved to have a new leader and she will, I am sure, be in all our prayers as she takes over a church that needs a steady hand and a great deal of wise judgement. Her job has been likened to the England Men's Football Manager role: everyone thinks they could do it better and no one seems to recognise the good things you achieve. Already her appointment has ruffled feathers because she isn't a man. I am happy to nail my colours firmly up there and say I welcome her, for who she is as a Bishop. Man or woman, the church needs strong leadership and a patient and understanding flock. I look forward to service as priest under her guidance. As always, anyone is more than welcome to discuss this with me and I will happily "put the kettle on" and open a packet of biscuits.

ALL AGE WORSHIP

10 am

A 30 minute informal service

Followed by Coffee, Cake, Crafts and Activituies

16th November

EXPLORING FAITH TOGETHER

North Curry Parish Church

For more info: www.athelneybenefice.com

Talking Cafe

When?

North Curry:
3rd Friday, Village Hall,
2pm to 4pm

Stoke St Gregory:
2nd Thursday, Village Coffee Shop, 10am to 12pm



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Stoke St Gregory



We are currently focused on our charitable donations at Stoke St Gregory WI: filling shoeboxes for ARC, the homeless charity in Taunton, gifting a wheelchair to Somerset Aid for Ukraine and sending off our annual donation to ACWW (The Associated Country Women of the World.) The money raised from our recent successful Nearly New Sale of Clothes, Shoes and Accessories will be used to fund these projects.

Our Members Meeting on **Tuesday November 11th** will be a Christmas themed social evening to get us all into the festive spirit. Mulled wine will be served while we undertake a taste test to see which is the best mince pie purchased from Sainsbury's, Tesco, Lidl or M&S. It will be interesting to see which Supermarket claims the title of best mince pies once the Members have voted.

We will be making an easy Christmas craft table favour to take home and always at a social event a WI quiz based on Christmas.

Debbie Bushell is running the Trade Stall, Lyn Willis is filling the rose bowl and Janice Pearce along with Jackie Smith are on refreshment duty. It should be a fun and relaxed evening.

If you ever wondered what we get up to at a meeting then please don't hesitate to get in touch for more details.

Amelia Holt,
President, 07985 317252





Stoke St Gregory School News

It is well known that schools are routinely "inspected" by OFSTED. Church schools such as the two in our Benefice also undergo a church equivalent, known as SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). Stoke St Gregory school had their SIAMS inspection only a few weeks into the current term and we've been keeping the outcome to ourselves until permitted to announce it… and it's great news!

Stoke St Gregory School is part of the Oak Partnership. Ian Robinson, CEO of the Trust recently wrote about the report and the school in their Trust Newsletter:

> "We're proud to share the outcome of our recent SIAMS inspection, which celebrates Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary as a nurturing and inclusive school where pupils and staff thrive. The glowing report highlights our strong sense of community, with close partnerships between the school, village, and The Oak Partnership MAT. Our refreshed vision—"Let your light shine"—is reflected in a culture of care, teamwork, and ambition. Inspectors praised our values-led approach, which supports pupils' personal development and prepares them well for future learning. The curriculum is thoughtfully designed, and pupils are encouraged to celebrate their strengths and support one another. Areas for development include broadening the RE curriculum to reflect a wider range of beliefs and deepening pupils' sense of social justice. We're grateful to our dedicated staff, supportive families, and engaged community for helping make our school a place where everyone can shine."

We are blessed to be able to work with the school. Every Tuesday morning either Revds Simon or Martin lead collective worship for the school, and once a month, or so, the "Open the Book" troupe also visit to act out a passage from the Bible. But it doesn't stop there. The school regularly visit the church, sometimes to learn about what we do, but often simply to "be" in the church and discover for themselves how peaceful and reflective it can be to sit quietly. The school also visits and celebrates Harvest, Christmas and Easter in the church. This is a very healthy two-way relationship: the links are strong and the opportunities broad.

Well done, Stoke St Gregory School!



St Margaret's Hospice Care

Volunteers Needed!

St Margaret's Hospice's Fireworks Night, Taunton Racecourse, Saturday 8th November 2025

St Margaret's Hospice is calling for enthusiastic volunteers to help make their brand-new Fireworks Night a "sparkling success".

They want to celebrate their 45th Anniversary in a dazzling way with a music-synchronised display and a fantastic evening for all the family. To make it all happen, the hospice needs helping hands from across the community.

The even will likely attract around 3,000 visitors and volunteers will help by welcoming guests, selling merchandise and collecting donations.

Other roles include car park marshals, welcome and safety marshals, merchandise sellers, ticket sellers, and bucket collectors. In return, every volunteer will receive a free ticket to the fireworks, along with a food and drink voucher and free parking as a thank-you for their generous time and support.

A bit of background…

Each year, St Margaret's supports around 5,000 patients and families across Somerset, providing specialist care, comfort, and compassion free of charge at the most difficult of times. By volunteering, you'll be helping the hospice continue this mission for local people who need it most.

If you think you can help out, sign up by visiting st-margarets-hospice.org.uk or email volunteering@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk





Food Banks and Harvest

Our recent Harvest Festival Celebrations were thoroughly enjoyable (read what Lyng have to say, for example, on page 12), and once again we thank those who put so much effort and love into making our four services and suppers/teas go so well. At each of our times together we joined in singing and praying, praising and giving thanks to God for all we have: the fellowship and the sustaining love of God through our friendships. Our suppers and teas were a delight, and thoroughly filling!

Food and Funds

It is certainly a sorrow that we need food banks in the first place and we would rather people were able to make "ends meet". Sadly life can be challenging for many, however, and so we have given generously to our two local banks, in Bridgwater and Taunton. We aren't sure exactly of how much food (by weight) we have given, but it is around 80kg. Thank you to those who have carried the many tins of soup and bags of pasta can and more… (Ruth, Chris, Judith, Hugh, Julie, Sue, Angela and Alison, with apologies to those missed out here…!). Added to the food itself, we collected around £900 across the benefice through our suppers and other offerings.

The food banks need this fund for when stocks get low. So, thank you to any and all who have given in whatever way they could.

We also thank those who volunteer for the banks week by week, caring for those who come for food. Not just in giving the food out, but by offering Christian fellowship in it's most important loving way.

Blessings!

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Jane Pine Tel 07990511477 or 01823 490759 Email: jane.pine2@btinternet.com

Website: www.mearegreenfarm.com

North Curry Flower Show

It might seem a long way off, but those plants don't just grow on their own (well, they do, but you know…)

Saturday August 16th 2026
2.00pm to 4.30pm
North Curry Village Hall



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Stoke St Gregory

Readers

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

2nd Nov	Barbara M
16th Nov	Sally
23rd Nov	Jordan
7th Dec	Barbara P

Sidespersons

2nd Nov	Will
16th Nov	Simon & Penny
23rd Nov	Barbara M
7th Dec	Barbara P

Cleaners

2nd Nov	Annette & Susan
9th Nov	Marilyn & Terri
16th Nov	Penny & Simon
23rd Nov	Linda & Brett
30th Nov	Annette & Susan
7th Dec	Penny & Simon

North Curry

	Sidesmen	Intercessions	Readers
2nd Nov	T Jeanes, J Sergeant	D Farnham	S Harrison
9th Nov	L Paul, L Farnham	J Satchwell	C Trim
16th Nov	Denise Walker	Z Sykes	M Piers
23rd Nov	J Dare, P Burgess	H Griffiths	D Akerman
7th Dec	C Trim, L B-Brown	D Walker	A Peters

Services across the Benefice

2nd November All Saints Sunday

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Service of the Word
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist (Baptism at 12noon)
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
11.00am	North Curry Methodist	Church Service with Holy Communion
5.00pm	Burrowbridge	Service of the Word, All Souls & All Saints

9th November Remembrance Sunday

9.30am	North Curry	Eucharist (then at the war memorial)
10.30am	Burrowbridge	Service of the Word
10.45am	Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church: joint Remembrance Service	

11th November (Tuesday) Remembrance Day

10.45am	Lyng	Remembrance Service

16th November 2nd Sunday before Advent Red

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Eucharist
10.00am	North Curry	Benefice informal all-age service
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist
4.00pm	North Curry	Evensong

23rd November Christ the King

9.30am	Burrowbridge	Eucharist
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist

With apologies that we cannot fit all our ecumenical friends' services into the page this month! (so many times to worship!)

30th November Advent Sunday

10.00am	Burrowbridge	United Benefice Service
10.30am	Stoke Baptist Church	Family Worship
11.00am	North Curry Methodist	Service

7th December 2nd Sunday of Advent

8.30am	North Curry	Prayer Book Eucharist
9.30am	Lyng	Service of the Word
10.00am	North Curry	Eucharist
11.00am	Stoke St Gregory	Eucharist with Baptism