

ST PETER & ST PAUL

NORTH CURRY'S PARISH CHURCH MAGAZINE

Welcome "Inmates"!

As we are Not to be sprung from lockdown this Spring, might as well just sit back and enjoy the Snow Drops and Daffodils from our homes again... or go back into hibernation until June!

Don't forget, the clocks "spring" forward this month too...as we all start to look forward to those lighter evenings.



TJ, TJ! A Top Job by Tom Jeanes, has the new church boundary fence completed in January – see centrefold for more!



MARCH 2021

A FREE PUBLICATION



Images: Strelitzia Regina or Bird of Paradise plant, by Portia Westhead – story p17
Jennifer Scott's Poinsettia from the February issue
Blackbird nest in the church porch

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A listing for Church officers and other local useful phone numbers, can be found on the inside back page.

www.northcurrychurch.co.uk/ email ncurrymag@gmail.com
For local events, check out the Parish Council website and calendar at
www.northcurry.com

Now is the time...
to become part
of the PCC team.

How about becoming the
editor of this fabulous little
magazine?

Or taking on the
treasurer's role?

**Come on... you know you
want to really...**

Contact
Mary 491434 or David 490234
if you would like to find out
more and become involved.



Whilst every care is taken to ensure all stated facts are correct, the editor cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions printed in the magazine, or the opinions of the contributors.

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Enquiries to Sue Harrison at
ncurrymag@gmail.com.

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Gathering and use of information in carrying out its tasks, North Curry PCC is involved in collecting personal data, addresses etc. We take privacy and confidentiality seriously, and fully comply with the principles of the United Kingdom GDPR/ Data Protection Act 2018.

Announcements/ News in Brief

North Curry Parish Church, congratulations to our 200 Club Winners

Prizes: First £30, Second £20, Third £10

December

1st Joh Popham

2nd Jenny Satchwell

3rd Ethne Conlon

Xmas Special: Haley Perry

January

1st Ralph Roberts

2nd Brian Moore

3rd Alex Dart

February

No draw took place;

It will be held in March

Revd Simon Bale has revamped the benefice bulletin.

The all new benefice bulletin is available – please email vicar@athelneybenefice.com to join.

This will replace the version that was previously prepared by David Walker.

The new website at www.athelneybenefice.com brings lots more information on worship and how to join the zoom services.

Given that it is not possible at present to have services or social/ fund raising events, the church income is severely reduced, yet the costs remain (parish share/ insurance/ maintenance etc). If you would like to join the Planned Giving Programme or adjust your present giving please contact David Akerman (490234).

Currently, no produce markets are planned for the foreseeable future, until Boris and friends give us the green light, which might be June!

World Day of Prayer – Friday 5th March

Due to the Covid19 restrictions, the World Day of Prayer Service will be postponed and will take place later in the year.

Spring Equinox, Saturday 20th March – yay, more daylight from then...especially once the clock changes, which occurs:

BST comes into effect on Sunday 28th March – springing an hour forward for Palm Sunday.

Village Litter Pick : 20th March

The Parish Council is organising a **socially distanced** Litter Pick on **Saturday, 20th March**, subject to any government guidelines/regulations at the time. We're meeting at **the Village Hall at 10am**; please come along to help if you possibly can. All you need is a pair of gardening-type gloves—yellow jackets and litter-pickers provided.

Many hands make light work and it all helps to maintain a clean, tidy and healthy environment for everyone.

Of course, even if you can't get there on the day, litter can be picked whenever you're out and about in the parish.

For further details please ring the Clerk on 490136 or Brian Jeanes on 490623.

Editor's Comments, Rob Ellis writes...

Just to think that this time last year, we had the last church social event; the Grand Quiz. 12 months on from lockdowns and restrictions, the mass vaccination must surely bring an end to our isolated environments. Though lockdown protocols may have opinion split as much as Brexit; well perhaps not that much, I suspect not even Nostradamus could have predicted our world since the beginning of last March. Hopefully some drier weather and these lighter evenings will make it a little easier to bear, as we look for the chance to enjoy our outdoor spaces.

At the beginning of February, a small working party got together at the church to remove the Christmas tree, which had remained in good condition (with hardly a needle falling from it). Just a shame that so few got the chance to see the decoration in all its splendour. And whilst we were at the church, we noticed the Blackbird nest in the porch (see inside cover for photo). It doesn't take long for nature to seize its chance; especially without the constant movement of people to disturb them.

Whatever you get up to this Spring, remember the clocks change towards the end of the month. Hopefully, come May and June, we can start to advertise some social events again. Stay reckless and unfit, or stay safe and well, your personal choice is the thing that matters most. It's a shame the government have forgotten that in treating us all like 5yrs olds...

St Patrick's Day *written by Tom Jeanes*

Anybody who lives or has any association with those on the west side of the St Georges Channel has to know about St Patrick banishing all snakes from Ireland. Of course he didn't have much problem with that since there were no snakes in Ireland in the first place. So what happened?



Patrick's life seems to a bit vague. He was born in Britain in a fairly wealthy family, possibly near Carlisle. His father Calpurnius was a Decurion (a sort of clan leader and a Deacon) but, at the age of sixteen was kidnapped by Irish raiders. He spent six years working as a shepherd but then he allegedly heard God tell him to flee to the coast where a ship would take him home. He did so, arrived back in Britain, then decided to study for the priesthood, in Auxerre in France and at Lerins Abbey. When he was ordained he returned to Ireland, probably near Wicklow, but was not welcomed there. He went north and for a time made his home on some islands off the Skerries coast, one of which still bears the name Inis Patrick. The first sanctuary dedicated to Patrick was at Saul, shortly after the dedication Beningus the son of a local chieftain Secnen joined the group. More people followed him, thousands were baptised many were ordained to lead Christian communities and he persuaded wealthy women to become nuns. To give a true picture, it should be added that the only description of his works written at the time was penned by himself.

Patrick's position as a foreigner in Ireland wasn't an easy one. His refusal to accept gifts from kings placed him outside the normal ties of kinship and patronage. He had very little protection legally and was robbed a few times and beaten up. He was put in chains and held prisoner for a time although the reason wasn't recorded. He was supposed to bring Christianity to Ireland, but there is evidence that there probably were a few Christian settlements before his arrival. He did, however popularise the religion causing it to be the accepted one over most of Ireland. The exact date of his death is not known; some put it at AD460 while others at AD493 or 494. The date of 17th March is also disputed. He is said to be buried in Downpatrick Cathedral, County Down. Another theory is that he was buried in Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset, although it should be remembered that the Somerset monks would say anything to get a few pilgrims in. They even made up some tosh about Joseph of Arimathea.....

Since his death his name has been celebrated more than any other saint in the world. Celebrations occur in many countries including Russia, Japan, Malaysia, Korea, several Caribbean islands and once on the International Space station. In some countries celebrants have been asked to tone down

their revelries because of the heavy drinking that occurs. In Ireland itself several sports fixtures are held on St Patrick's Day. A good way to remember a remarkable man.

Finally the snakes. It is now thought to be an allegory based on his skill of persuading many people to embrace Christianity thereby 'crowding out' the Druids, almost banishing them.



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North Curry and District Amateur Gardeners

By Heather Williams

Why Not Grow Your Own?



Another March, another lockdown! Who'd have thought it? We need our gardens and its healthy produce more than ever and everyone can grow some fresh veg no matter how small the plot or patio. All you need are three decent size containers, minimum 14" (35cm) diameter and 18" (45cm) depth, some really good compost because this is an intensive system and its going to work hard for you, and a decision made to grow either one crop pots or a three+ veg post which will necessarily need to be bigger.

Salad leaves, rocket or baby beet leaf take around 8 weeks so sow your leaves in the first pot, around 5 weeks later you can seed your second pot and by week 9 you'll be picking your first leaves and sowing your final pot.

If you don't fancy salads maybe try some stumpy carrots or some mange tout peas or baby leaf kale although these will take 8 to 10 weeks and sowings need adjusting accordingly.

Want a bit more variety? In a decent sized pot or tub you could go for peas surrounded by carrots, spinach and dwarf French beans or scarlet runners with beetroot and maybe some little turnips for roasting, even leeks and cavalo negro are possible.

This is the same system; you only need to adjust your sowing times as these take around 10-12 weeks. If you get really enthusiastic you can adjust your sowings so you have early, mid-season and late maturing crops.

Research your seeds and select the smaller varieties if possible. You will need to keep your crops moist, test moisture levels by sticking your finger well down into the pot; even if it's been raining it can be surprisingly dry at the roots; also probably best not placed in the hottest part in the garden. After about 6 weeks, you will need to start feeding as they are going to be hungry. You can use a general-purpose feed such as seaweed or nettle tea switching to a high potassium tomato feed or comfrey tea as they start to flower and fruit.

When your first pot has been cropped and is ready for resowing, there's no need to replace all the compost particularly for the salad crops. Just scrape out a few inches of old stuff and put in some fresh on the top. Don't be tempted to over sow, you'll get fungal disease. Some marigolds or nasturtiums would look good among the veg as well as acting as an aphid deterrent.

Have a go and enjoy your garden whatever you like to do in it!

The Revd Simon Bale writes

One month along and finally I am part of the North Curry Experience. Is that a thing? Well, it is to me. It's been quite an experience, and I expect will continue to be if the welcome I am receiving is anything to go by. Thank you all.

I was officially licensed to the Benefice of Athelney on 4th February and I am currently the "priest in charge" rather than the vicar. This is a technicality. I cannot be the vicar until I am installed (somewhat like a new washing machine) in person in a church in the benefice. I have to be shown to the vicar's stall and receive tokens and symbols of the parishes and so on. That cannot yet happen through a zoom worship, no matter how clever the software! So, watch this space: once the virus permits, we will arrange a proper gathering in one of the four churches and I can be accurately labelled vicar. For now, however, we won't use "priest-in-charge's letter"; that is way too cumbersome.

It was wonderful, however, to see so many of you at my licensing, and I only wish I could have said hello to each one of you. That time will come. In the meantime I am sort of based out of the Church Rooms in Stoke St Gregory. "Sort of" because, frankly, this week just gone has been far too cold to sit in the room, even huddled against the radiator and wearing thick socks so I have flipped between my home in Bridgwater and the benefice. I have cycled a bit around the area as I said I would, but that too has been a tricky affair in the rain which preceded the freeze. I am being told from all sides to wear waterproof trousers, but being a stubborn old bloke I resist, and end up with trousers covered in wet muck. My own stupidity, I know... All that said, I have begun to enjoy the beauty of the benefice, from the roads closed due to floods, and then the striking image of the frozen floods the following week. I can't tell you how excited Louise and I are at moving to live with you in the vicarage on Stoke Road, but that is not happening just yet (all very technical: not for this letter). When it does, and when the virus lets us, we will be much more visible and the vicarage door will be open to you all.

In the meantime, we have entered Lent and a time of penitential reflection. (Crumbs, that's brought us all down to earth, eh?) Lent is a time to reflect on who we are and I can only say from my point of view that I am blessed to be with you. The past year has taught us all many things about ourselves, and I am planning to set up a series of "Lent Discussions" via zoom that I hope will give us all the chance to share our thoughts, open our hearts in prayer and hear how we all face the future, as uncertain as it seems. If you would like to join any of these discussions, there is a link on the benefice web site: www.athelneybenefice.com. They will be lightweight, friendly and accessible. All you need is an open heart. Do think of joining in. It would be lovely to see you.

Every blessing! Revd Simon

Pay loving attention

By Bishop Nigel

With the Lenten Season well under way, I wonder how it is going for you? I always anticipate Lent with a slight feeling of having to brace myself. Come on make an effort in something! If I am going to give something up don't just make it an exercise in self-improvement, how is it going to help others? If I am going to do something positive what will be its long-term effect? It is all too easy to 'over think' the whole exercise.

Once the season is underway I begin to appreciate it. But in the end it should be about paying attention to God. I am always struck by the end of the story of the temptations in the wilderness. Jesus refuses to be a cheap miracle worker to benefit himself, and refuses to follow the route to worldly power and status. He faced temptation by stripping away all the necessities of life and knew deep hunger. At the end of this exhausting wrestle with his vocation the Gospel tells us "...suddenly angels came and waited on him." (Matthew 4:10) Whatever Lenten discipline you are following, perhaps the #Live Lent course, or a local study group, a focussed effort to support others or a form of self-denial (or all of them!), may it bring a greater focus on God.

There were those who ministered to Jesus in the Gospel stories. The angels in the wilderness, the woman who anointed him, Simon who carried his cross for example. We might not be able to do those things for him, but we can pay loving attention.

When we emerge from the austerity and effort of Lent, which has had an even more austere aspect in Lockdown, we come to the bright hope of Easter. We know in the Risen Christ the same relief that Jesus knew from the Angels. As we offer our love to Him, His love for us is always returned.

May the blessing of the Risen Christ be with you.

Nigel Stock
Assistant Bishop

More information can be found at the Bath and Wells Diocese website. Go to www.bathandwells.org.uk to find out more about worship in Somerset and church stories from around the county.

Seeds of joy

Curry Mallet Church of England primary is celebrating after receiving a cash boost for their school bee garden and veg plot in the Seeds of Joy competition. Although not overall winners, they received £1,000 from the Higgidy, the pie makers, thanks to support of people across the diocese. The company, who were looking to support community garden projects, were impressed by the school's aspirations.

Fly the flag for Somerset Day

This year Somerset Day organisers are asking people to #flytheflagforsomerset on 11th May. That can be by flying the distinctive Somerset flag with its bright red dragon from a flagpole, or simply by painting Somerset flag picture to display in your front window.

Bishop Ruth, a Patron of Somerset Day, says, "On Somerset Day I share with others in giving thanks for all the amazing people whether neighbours or strangers who share such smiles and warmth and care for each other everyday in Somerset – Thank you Somerset."

The Athelney Benefice – Service Rota

All church services remain suspended until further notice.

However, Revd Simon Bale will be "zooming" in your home every Sunday at 10am. To join, go to www.athelneybenefice.com and follow the links.



A new look Bulletin and a thank you

Our new look weekly bulletin contains all the same information, vicar's letter, prayer list, readings and so on, but it's coming via our new and emerging web site. All very clever (and probably therefore, will involve a few Gremlins!)

Most importantly in this issue are our thanks to David Walker, who through the vacancy and especially this past year of pandemic has been committed to producing the weekly bulletin for everyone. Thank you, David, for your hard work and attention to detail.

For more information on all the churches and how to join the bulletin service, visit the all new website at athelneybenefice.com.

News from North Curry/ Curland Methodists, by Daphne Gilham

Rev'd Deborah Kirk, Methodist Minister 01823 334854/ deborah.m.kirk@googlemail.com

It was with great pleasure that the Church Council received the information from the powers that be, that permission for the removal of two small pews from the back of the chapel had been granted. The truth of the matter is of course, in the present climate, thanks to Covid 19, no work can be carried out.

So now the congregation is now looking forward to the time when such improvements can take place.

On a happier note, it can be mentioned that vaccinations are going ahead for the majority of the members. There are some benefits for belonging to the more mature age group!

During the lockdown, North Curry/Curland friends are enjoying the skills of some technically minded people in the Circuit to provide services regularly on line. Their efforts are much appreciated.

Also, during the forced 'Stay at home' situation, many people have discovered forgotten pastimes and occupations.

It is also a fact that book sales (mostly on line it as to be said) have shot up as folk have taken up reading to pass away the extra hours at their disposal. A report on this topic will appear in the April magazines.

Meanwhile, we keep in touch with our own members by telephone and letters and send greetings to all friends in the Circuit and beyond.

The North Curry Parish Church 200 Club always has room for one more!

Players must be 18yrs+ to join. Only **£18 per year (£1.50/month)**

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To sign up, contact Sue Bethune on 01823 490179

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But the Queen said... by Dave Patten

The calendar may have read March 14th 1985, but inside our church it felt like the 16th century. At the time Michael Lewis had been the vicar for nearly twenty years, but his wish to move the High Altar to the crossing met with considerable opposition in the village. He reasoned that he was too far from the congregation and probably could not be heard clearly enough. The PCC voted 11-4 in favour of the move and a temporary nave altar was established there after removing seven pews. However a movement developed led by Mrs Fiddian Green from Calmady House who had lived in the village just 18 months (She'd also objected to the church bells, though a churchwarden was heard to remark that as the address was Church Road it might have provided a clue). There were six other petitioners including Donald Phillips from Moredon. Much unpleasantness was generated, with anonymous letters being sent, and some who never went to church taking sides.

The church law moved, or possibly retreated, into the 16th Century by appointing a Consistory Court. The presiding official, called The Chancellor, was Mr GH Newman QC, and his beautifully hand-written notes can all be found in the Somerset Archives in Taunton. The proceedings were known as the North Curry Faculty Petition for Nave Altar. The petitioners were represented by Mr FM Pulvermacher – lovely name – from solicitors Alms and Young. It was such a rare event – probably no-one other than the specialist ecclesiastical solicitors had ever witnessed one – that I took a day off work to attend. It was pure theatre.

From the Chancellors notes we can see that he said that such proceedings were “very rare, and there is no manual of procedure. Evidence will be given under oath and witnesses can be cross-examined. The costs will fall on the petitioners if they lose.” The proceedings lasted two days. Notes reveal that 63 letters received were in favour, 59 against.

The Judges witness was the Very Rev Dean Richard Shuttleworth Wingfield Digby – but fortunately just known as Dick. (According to the *Daily Telegraph* 2007 obituary he was quite a wag. In January 1976, a violent storm overturned a flèche on the south tower of Peterborough cathedral. Thirteen feet high, and weighing more than two tons, this presented a serious hazard to pedestrians below. The architect and the local contractor were unable to attend the emergency, so Dick recruited two tug-of-war teams from the cathedral staff and, with the aid of long ropes, had the flèche hauled down to the Bishop's garden, where it landed with a loud crash. The Bishop was fortunately reportedly not at home.)

Constance Dowling an objector from Stoke Road described the experimental altar as the Berlin Wall and felt “I had been to a community centre having a cup of coffee and not to church at all.” Donald Phillips said he was “a 1662 man.”

Case swung on what Queen Elizabeth I had said

The key expert witness was Alan Rome FRIBA from Yatton a leading distinguished ecclesiastical architect who said in evidence that the interior was "competent, plain but decent. Over-pewing running across the axis of the transept is wrong aesthetically. Removal of pews will be a considerable artistic gain. The Rubric in the Prayer Book of 1552 said that at communion time the table shall stand in the body of the church. The Injunction of Queen Elizabeth I issued in 1559 said that the congregation might better hear the service and more conveniently communicate."

Reserved judgment was given in favour of the nave altar remaining and while the protestors would normally pay all costs, perhaps surprisingly in view of all the aggro, the PCC paid their own costs of £540.

In 2006 the then vicar Charles Townshend said that "the present situation has been entirely accepted and the objectors of 20 years ago are either no longer with us or reconciled to the changes." But sadly due to the ill-feeling in the village, this was felt a contributory reason to Michael Lewis leaving the parish two years later.

And an author's footnote: We had a holiday on Crete during Michael's tenure and took a lovely picture of a small boy that I wished to send on. As Michael was a Greek (and Latin) scholar he wrote an accompanying letter, but after it had gone revealed that he knew Classical Greek so it was "rather like receiving a letter from the Chaucer now." I wonder what the Cretans thought when they opened it!

Amended from Dave Patten's book Rich men poor men of North Curry, copies still available from the PO Stores, at £10, profits to a hill school in Nepal.

Churchwardens' Report

As you know for some time now the Churchwardens have been giving you regular updates on activities both in the Church and the Community.

We now have Simon, our wonderful new Vicar with us and he has kindly offered to take on this task. Obviously should we feel the need to burst into print we will do so - having informed our Vicar!

Thank you all so very much for all your support and indeed supplying us with needed information or opinions.

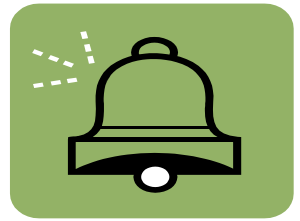
Sincerely, with much gratitude

Mary Piers 491434

David Akerman 490234

Ask not for whom the bells toll ...

“Save our bells” proclaims the poster on the church gate: a message that has been there for over a year now.



So – a year on – have they been saved?

It's a question asked not infrequently!
After all, it's a simple one isn't it?
Have the bells been fixed yet?

If only it were so simple ...

Inevitably, like anything else in life, things wear out and need a revamp. Indeed at any time there are countless churches around the country with bells out of action for a variety of reasons. Sometimes of course it's the church building itself. A local example in our area is Bishops Lydeard, which has a lovely set of bells; but there are structural problems in the tower there which mean that ringing has had to be suspended.

That's not the problem in North Curry. Apart from the occasional leak in the roof, the tower is in good shape generally, indeed the way that the church has been built means it is a really solid structure: unlike many churches with tall, slim towers which sway when the bells are rung – West Monkton near to us here being such an example. No, the construction of the North Curry tower, firmly anchored above the crossing, means it has a strength which many other churches just don't have.

The issue for us is the bells themselves, and in particular the frame in which they sit. The frame – which dates from 1811, as do the heavier bells – is made from oak, with a metal extension installed in 1894 which houses three of the lighter bells. Bells, frame and fittings have been heavily worked on over the years during regular maintenance: to the extent that the whole assembly is really past its prime and becoming increasingly unsafe to ring. Hence the inspections and renovation proposals in 2019 ...

Late 2019 found the ringers gradually getting into gear with initial local fundraising, and at the turn of the year more ambitious plans to move to a higher level with bodies such as the National Lottery. Then Covid came along, and as we all know nothing has quite been the same since. Certainly not the bells ...

Plan A was to repair or recast the existing bells, but this was going to be costly, and funding opportunities were shrinking. Plan B was to use bells from a redundant church. Darren Woodyer, tower captain, worked through an organisation which specialises in finding new homes for unused bells. There aren't many to choose from – and of course the bells have to be right for North Curry. Two opportunities in Lancashire were considered in detail, which was difficult when inspection trips had to be postponed owing to lockdown restrictions. In the end, unfortunately, neither was feasible. So – back to the drawing board it is ...

In the meantime can we not ring the bells, or at least some of them? After all, they were rung on Christmas Day. This however was only after a very thorough inspection up in the belfry, and some temporary measures to ensure all was safe. From a practical viewpoint it's just not feasible to exert all this effort – just to ring for a maximum of 15 minutes which is all the Covid regulations allow. After all even with properly functioning bells, ringing is out of the question for now in most churches, given the generally restricted space in the average tower which in effect prevents “social distancing”. There are regular edicts from the “Central Council of Church Bellringers” which dictate what we can and can't do ! It's complicated. And sad in our case for example that we weren't able to celebrate the installation of our new vicar.

So for now – we'll have to be content with hearing the quarterly clock chimes. Given that this is mechanised, and the three bells which are used for this are struck whilst static by special clock-hammers, this can continue as long as the current bells remain. Only once the bells are removed for renovation will the chimes pause temporarily. That will be the sign that something is finally happening!

Watch this space. Even if the current bellringers will be out of action by the time the programme is completed, we owe it to the next generation to “get bells done”. Our forbears did it – surely we can. Best wishes to the PCC bells committee in their endeavours!

Joint Chairmen:

Gill Slocombe and Sherry Keith-Welsh

Our hopes to restart NCS meetings in the spring were rather ambitious. Outdoor activities may be possible in the summer, but realistically indoor talks will have to wait until later.

The Society does not have contact details for the majority of the membership - until COVID there has been no pressing need! The information would be used by the NCS committee solely to communicate with the NCS membership on Society matters. If you are happy please send your phone number and email address to: Alex Morrice (aandsmorrice@gmail.com 01823 490917 text to 07802 408045)

If you are a member and do not wish your details to be held by the committee - that would be useful to know.

We generally meet in the Village Hall on the third Wednesday each month for talks on subjects of local interest. Speakers have been put on standby, and a meetings programme will be published later.

Strelitsia Regina

In the entire corner of my conservatory I grow a *Strelitsia Regina* or Bird of Paradise plant with a very long history. I inherited it from an old lady who lived near me in Sussex. She had been both married and widowed in the Second World War. When she died the poor plant lived for six months without any water till her niece came from Australia to claim her inheritance. I asked if I could buy the plant from her: only to be told she considered the plant to be a weed back home and I could gladly have it. This was back in 1987 when my Bird of Paradise was at least twenty years old. It flowers for me in the winter and this year it is to have eight flowers. Each flower lasts for at least six weeks.

Portia Westhead





North Curry W.I.

Presented by, Kate Roberts, President
ZOOM and Jerusalem

Like so many groups and organisations, North Curry WI last met in the village hall over a year ago.

We are still wondering how many more months will pass before we can do so again, more so because the whole ethos of the WI has always been to actually meet in person, to feel that sense of belonging, of fellowship and of shared experiences. The first Wednesday afternoon of each month was a date in our diaries for getting together and 'catching up' with tea and cake and whatever else was on offer! For a year that has been missing.

However - **we are still surviving!** We have had to look at different ways of doing things and exploring opportunities that we would never have done before. How many of us 12 months ago had even heard of Zoom, let alone used it! And yet now many of us spend much of our time peering at images of family, friends and fellow members on our screens, working out how to join a meeting, share a screen, connect to video, live chat, mute or unmute etc! While it's perhaps not what we would all want to be doing, it has forced us to do something new and embrace change, which can't be a bad thing.

Thanks to technology and through the undaunting efforts of our federation, both locally and nationally, we have been able to still keep in touch with our members. Each week via Zoom we have been entertained by a wide variety of speakers such as from the Wildlife Trust, Air Ambulance and Cyber Crime, as well as authors, musicians, and popular television stars. We have been able to partake of on-line, cookery demonstrations and art and craft courses of every description, we 'attended' the SCFWI Annual Meeting involving all of County and at Christmas experienced the joy of joining in carol services with other groups

Over the past 100 years, WI members have campaigned on issues which stem directly from the concerns of members and which bring a series of controversial issues into the public domain, influencing getting many changes made in legislation and government policy. Each year members vote, from a shortlist, the campaign they would like to go forward for further discussion at the National Annual Meeting and despite lockdown this has still gone ahead virtually. We recently took part in voting for one of the five of this year's decided resolutions, which were - a call to increase awareness of ovarian cancer, premature death from coronary heart disease, racism and discrimination, creating wildlife friendly communities or stopping the destruction of peat bogs – certainly diverse concerns!

With our new found technology skills, we are well aware that not all of our members are digitally connected or would wish to be (in fact that involves 12 of our members) but we do make sure that no-one is forgotten and that they receive all the correspondence, magazines and newsletters as well as phone calls, and if decisions need to be made or ideas asked for, all members are involved. Throughout the year every member receives a card on their birthday and at Christmas we were able to deliver Christmas gifts and cards to everyone with socially distanced visits.

Yes, Zoom has been a 'boom' and we are thankful for it, but many members have also given much of their time in other ways of thinking of others. Apart from helping with shopping, errands and transport, throughout Somerset there have been hundreds of PPE, face masks, dementia blankets, sensory bands, oncology hats and hand puppets made with loving hands and sent to hospitals, care homes and schools. At Christmas over 400 shoe boxes were filled and given to homeless charities, YMCA and local families in need. These are some of the wonderful things that WI's have been doing throughout the year to keep in touch with fellow members and their communities. The sense of belonging hasn't gone away. It's different, but it's still there.

Our Churchyard

Whether you are a person of faith or not, the churchyard in North Curry actually gets quite a few "visitors". It is certainly a good place to get away from it all. During my involvement of building the new fence, it became a source of my only "social event" during January, as many would stop to chat whilst going about their daily business.

One thinks of a churchyard of a place to pay your respects to those that have passed, but ours offers so much more. As well as those paying respect, the footpath through the churchyard proves a good starting point for the levels or en route to Moredon Hill, for both dog walkers and those out for a bit of fresh air and exercise. The grounds are large enough too to allow for a casual stretch of the legs, in perfect peace and social distance, or just to sit on the various benches to watch the wildlife and world in general as it passes. The carpet of flowers is very spectacular this time of year,

The views from the north side, across the Tone vale to the yonder hills make for an idyllic backdrop to reflect and ponder on life in general, or just to clear the mind and let the eye wander the horizon.

If you have not visited there for a while, I thoroughly recommend a trek down to experience its tranquillity yourself. You will not regret it...

We can stop to chat now, the fence is finished...

In between the showers, the replacement of the rusting chain link fence was completed in January. Its construction, perfectly complementing the previous rebuild of the northern boundary fence to the extended churchyard. Once again, Tom Jeanes planned, dug and nailed every piece of timber into place.



Whilst we did not have the luxury of 20,000 onlookers witnessing the final nail, and we could not arrange for the beautiful Gal Gadot (that is the Wonder Woman actress for those of you in not in the know) to officially unveil the finished fence, we are rather pleased with the way the job came out.

Hopefully, it will still be there in a 100 yrs+, when generations to come will marvel at its design lines and sturdiness – though they will probably just ignore it – which is perhaps a sign of a good job; you only notice it if it is out of place!



Some behind the scenes photos of the construction in progress...



2022 Calendar Competition.

After the success of the 2021 calendar, we have decided to run the competition again this year – it's your own fault for all being so super talented and artistic!

The competition for selection is open to all amateur photographers who live in the parish, and as before, the subject is to be the parish month by month – places, events, and so on; family photos are not required.

The aim is to create a calendar with relevant pictures for each month of the year, so don't hesitate to submit winter pictures!

Ideally, each photo ought to be LANDSCAPE in orientation (like the image to the right) to be considered, and bearing in mind will be A4 size once published, must be of a high definition quality.



The name and address of the photographer, together with the picture title, location, and month must be identified for each photograph, and the photographer must declare that they hold the copyright.

So to recap, entries are to be submitted to the editor of the parish magazine in digital format in high resolution JPEG files, in landscape format, at not less than 200 dpi, and sent to **ncurrymag@gmail.com with an email covering** the instructions in the paragraph above.

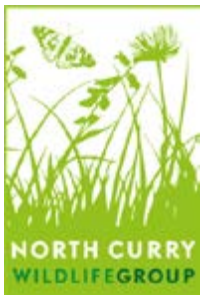
The closing date for entries is 31st August 2021.

No fees will be paid to the entrants, and the proceeds of the sale of the calendar are to benefit the parish church.

Selection will be made by a panel of judges, appointed by the PCC; the criteria will be the merit of the photograph and its suitability for the calendar. The judges' decision is final.

We look forward to seeing your creative pictures.

However, portrait orientated pictures might be used for the front cover of the magazine. So if you have a stunning portrait picture that you wish to share with the village, send it to the editor for consideration.



North Curry Wildlife Group

In every green and verdant lawn, a sleeping meadow lies

By Sarah Shuttleworth

During the first lockdown, we all took solace in nature, whether we were tending to the budding plants in our gardens, going for our daily walks in the stunning countryside or watching the birds busily preparing for nesting. Now it's time to give back to nature and give it a helping hand.

If we could all do something for wildlife in our own green spaces then the overall effect would be sensational. So why not create a mini-meadow in your garden? And when I say 'mini', I mean as big or small as you like. Even if it's only 1 metre square or a corner of your lawn, it all makes a huge difference.

We all have very specific images in our minds when we think of a wildflower meadow – maybe acres of colour and grass swaying in the wind. Our lawns hardly seem to compare to these imaginings. However, when you get down and really inspect your lawn, so many species are already there waiting and eager for a chance to bloom: species such as Self-heal, Common Catsear, Daisy, Thyme-leaved Speedwell, Germander Speedwell, Clover and even the humble Dandelion. If you simply leave a patch of your lawn to grow from April through to August, then you will be amazed at what pops up, and it provides such a wealth of resources to so much wildlife. The flowers themselves are essential for pollinating insects. The structure of the longer grass creates hiding places for crickets, grasshoppers and beetles. Suddenly, the boring patch of green carpet is alive with buzzing and vibrations from wings. All these provide more food for bigger insects like dragonflies and for birds.

This little buzzing patch can of course be enhanced to provide even more flowers both for insect and admirer alike. You can now buy seed from so many native wildflower species, in mixes or as individual species to scatter freely. However, it is worth remembering that many places that sell wildflower mixes in little packets are not always the best option. They usually contain either a mix of non-native species or, most likely, annual species that prefer the disturbed ground of cornfield margins, and will not return the following year even if they successfully germinate in the first place.

During last year, I experimented with different methods. Initially, I left one area long and did not add to it, mostly because we are lucky enough to have lots of Oxeye Daisy in our lawn already, with other species like Self-heal, Common Catsear and Spotted Medick. In another area, I scalped the top of the turf and sowed a local (Curry Rivel) meadow seed mix that included grasses. For the final area, I grew hundreds of wildflower seedlings including Bird's-foot Trefoil, Lady's Bedstraw, Common Knapweed, Field Scabious and

Meadow Vetchling. I then planted them into the lawn as fairly established small plants. The beauty of these is that they are all perennials; therefore, the initial effort is the only part that required work. The seedlings were exceptionally easy to grow, with a high germination rate, and in particular Bird's-foot Trefoil was very easy and has thrived after being planted in.

I would say the most successful approach is to leave your lawn to grow long the first year between April and August. Remember to take away the cuttings when you cut it, as wildflowers do not like nutrient heavy soils. See what pops up and flowers, mow around the edge to keep it neat, or mow paths through it if you are doing your whole lawn. Then add to the meadow with home-grown plug plants from native wildflower seed.

Seedlings



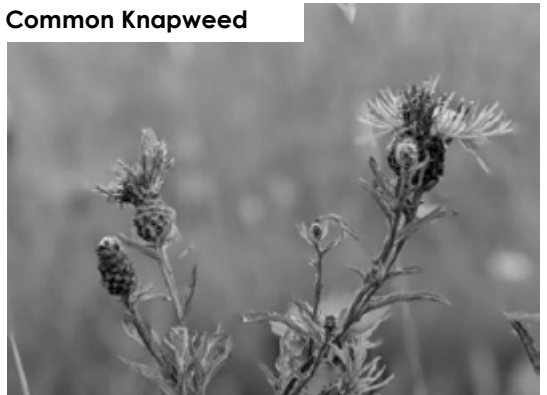
The only plant species that I would recommend sowing directly is Yellow Rattle. This is because, being an annual, it is harder to justify the effort of growing on in pots, plus the seeds need vernalization over the winter. This flower is also known as the 'Meadow Maker' because it is semi-parasitic on grasses and therefore suppresses their growth. This allows more wildflowers to flourish rather than being choked

up by an abundance of coarse grasses. Again, try to buy this seed from a specialist supplier, as you will be guaranteed fresh stock. Rake the lawn where you wish to sow it to expose some soil, scatter the seed and tread in. This is ideally done in September.

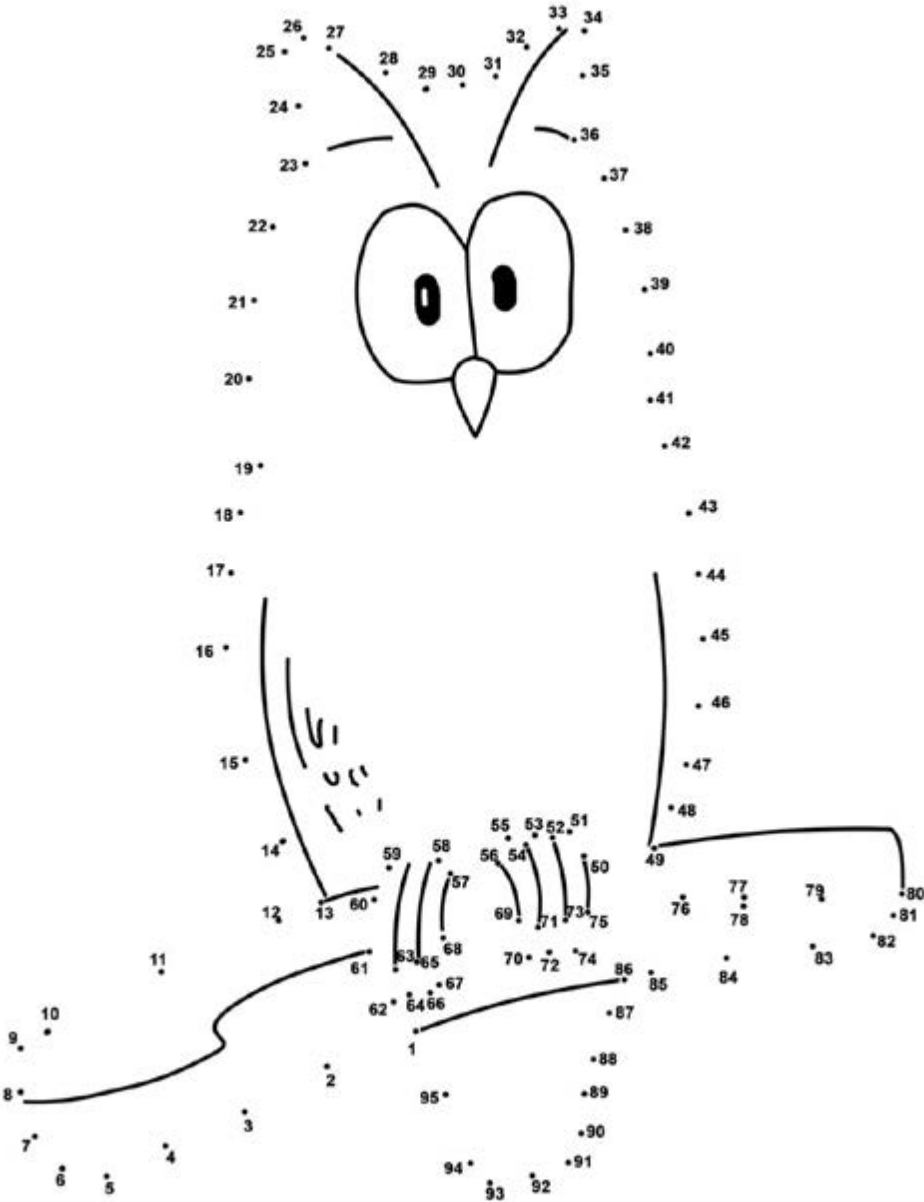
We thoroughly enjoyed our various meadow areas and they created a great visual display all summer long. At night, the sound of crickets was blissful; their presence had definitely increased with the longer grass. I enjoyed this process so much that it inspired my Christmas giving.

I made family and friends 'Mini Meadow Making Kits', with all that they would need to create a meadow area in their garden. I implore you to try it this year, and reap the benefits of a buzzing meadow in your garden.

Common Knapweed



Tea Break!



T'whoo do you think you are drawing?

Write the letters in the alphabetical order.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

1. e f c

1.

2. a d b

2.

3. x z y

3.

4. b k g

4.

5. m o a

5.

6. i h k

6.

7. l m s

7.

8. u m v

8.

9. u s t

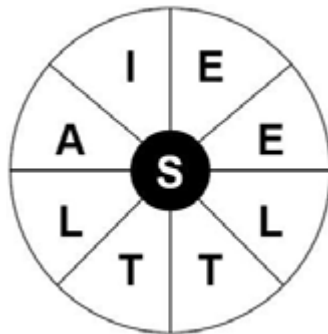
9.

10. w v u

10.

Medium (0.47)

2	4				9	7		1
		1			6		4	
	3	6				2		
5			9				1	6
			6		2			
6	9				7			4
		3				6	8	
	5		8			4		
8		2	7				3	5



A Sudoku and Word Wheel. Good luck in solving them.

North Curry Sport Ltd (White Street sports ground)



200 Club (North Curry Sports Ltd) Congratulations to these winners:

January

Youth Football Club £25. T Stone £15. D Alford £10

February

M Piers £25. Youth Football Club £15. B Thomas £10.

March

M Baxter £25. N Grant £15. Youth Football Club £10.

Why not join the 200 Club? To join, simply email: whitestreet@northcurry.com and we'll get in touch about setting up a standing order.

Covid-19 Restrictions

During the Covid-19 restrictions, you are welcome to walk around the border of the site and through the Community Woodland. But all pitches and facilities remain off-limits to the public. You may see authorised users in the pavilion and workers maintaining the pitches or doing other jobs, but please respect their space and safety.

North Curry Church

Is part of the Benefice of Athelney, along with the parishes of Stoke St. Gregory, Lyng and Burrowbridge – the Parish Church is frequently referred to as 'The Cathedral of the Moors', and from the River Tone valley it is easy to understand why. It was built on a site of an earlier Norman church in about 1300 in the Decorated style, using Ham Hill stone, blue lias stone, and some grey sandstone from a quarry within the parish. About a hundred years later it was updated in the Perpendicular style when the roofs of the nave and aisles were raised to accommodate larger windows.

Evidences of the original pitches can be seen both outside on the south and east faces of the tower, and inside on its west arch. At this time the upper stage of the tower and the parapets were added, as was the interesting collection of gargoyles and hunkypunks.

The North Curry Parish Registers of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials date from 1539 and are almost complete.

The churchyard, just over two acres, is in two parts, with the lower 'new' part has been in use since 1952. The upper 'old' part has gravestones that are centuries old, and includes war memorials. A plan of the graves, complete with the names of the occupants, can be found in the church porch. This is a place of solace and tranquillity, with seating on the north (far) side affording magnificent views across the River Tone to yonder hills in all directions. In springtime, the natural beauty is never more apparent, when the flora carpets amongst the headstones and trees.

Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals

If you are interested in getting married, having a church blessing for a civil marriage or organising a baptism or funeral please contact one of the churchwardens.

The statutory fees are set by the Church of England and a fee list is displayed in the church porch, or is available online from www.churchofengland.org.

Additional local fees may be due in accordance with the services required.

At the time of your enquiry, all fee options will be explained.

There are also regulations governing the condition of the churchyard and graves, designed to ensure it remains a special peaceful place.

Will Planning and Legacies

Having a Will in place, for when the time comes, is strongly recommended for all individuals, to ensure your final wishes are clearly laid out to friends and family.

Planned Giving and Donations

Planned Giving, by standing order, is a regular charitable payment (or pledge) to the church. This type of giving is an important and integral aspect of our finances, as the majority of our income comes through the planned giving scheme.

Donation pledges by standing order are easier to administer, both for you and us. Regular planned giving can also attract tax gift aid, enabling us to boost your donation by 25%. Donations can be given monthly, quarterly, or yearly, and the amount is very much up to you. You are not beholden once started, and can be cancelled at anytime. Please contact our Treasurer for the appropriate forms to complete, or to discuss your giving pledge. Standing order mandates are not the same as direct debit mandates. The amounts and dates are fixed, and the instruction to your bank is completely controlled by you.

One off donations can be made anytime – cheques payable to North Curry PCC, and can be mailed to the Church address – see inside back page for details.

BACS to North Curry PCC – Account No: 00514650, Sort Code: 30-98-45

Commonwealth War Graves

Private Harry Udell Gannett, Devonshire Regiment died 13th January 1919

Private Charles William Stodgell, Devonshire Regiment died 2nd February 1919

Second Lieutenant Peter John Carr , Royal Artillery died 11th October 1941

Sgt John Bernard Hebditch, Royal Airforce Volunteer Res. died 1st December 1943

Information taken from the War Graves Commission website

Register of:

Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals (September 2020 – February 2021)

Baptisms

None

Weddings

None

Funerals

None

CHURCH OPENING & CLOSING ROTA

Due to lockdown protocols, the Church is closed. Accordingly, there is no rota to publish!

However, if you would like to join the rota for when things get back to “normal”, please contact Mary Piers.

Churchwardens /officers numbers see inside back page

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Reader	Ralph Roberts	01823 490933
Churchwarden	David Akerman	01823 490234
Churchwarden & Verger	Mary Piers	01823 491434
Churchwarden Emeritus	Janet Dare	01823 490747
PCC Secretary/ Safe Guarding	Helen Griffiths	01823 491298
PCC Treasurer	Vacant, Interim - David Akerman	
Tower Captain	Darren Woodyer	01823 690162
Flower List Organiser	Lorraine Bryan Brown	01823 491665
Events Bookings Secretary	David Walker	01823 491231
Produce Market Organiser	Anne Williams	01823 490319
Little Angels/ Electoral Roll	Jenny Satchwell	01823 490463
Choir	Jean Smith	01823 490961
PCC 200 Club	Sue Bethune	01823 490179

PCC (Parochial Church Council) Address, for general correspondences
St Peter and St Paul Church, Church Road, North Curry, Somerset. TA3 6LJ
(Post box by kissing gate, at vicar's parking area)

The church website is www.northcurrychurch.co.uk

Magazine Editor	Rob Ellis	01823 490599
Advertising Enquiries	Sue Harrison	use email below
Magazine Distribution	Jenny Satchwell	01823 490463
	or Paul Scott	01823 490679

General enquiries - email: ncurrymag@gmail.com

Other useful numbers for North Curry

Coffee Shop	01823 491414	
Little Herons	01823 490423	www.northcurryschool.co.uk/little-herons-pre-school/
Methodist Minister	01823 334854	Revd Deborah Kirk
Parish Council Offices	01823 490136	www.northcurry.com
Post Office/ Stores	01823 490261	
Primary School	01823 490423	www.northcurryschool.co.uk
Surgery	01823 490505	www.northcurryhealthcentre.co.uk

Community Police officers:

Tony Wearmouth 07885 655312 tony.wearmouth@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Steve Chapman 07889 655196 steve.chapman@avonandsomerset.police.uk

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