

St Mary's Northchurch Newsletter



Parish Room Bookings:
Emily Millar
Mobile: 07929934367



Church enquiries to:
Revd Jonathan Gordon
01442 871547
revjagordon@googlemail.com

May 2018

A small person in a big universe

At the time of writing the sun is shining, I can hear birdsong and there is a great feeling that after a long cold and wet winter, spring at least for a while has broken through and we are given a hint of the summer ahead. To add to this sense of well being, the River Bulbourne is flowing again and the spring daffodils around the school and church look extraordinarily beautiful. This is an exciting time for gardeners, folk are busy on the allotments and we can be reminded again of the benefits of living in an area of natural beauty.

There has always been in church teaching an appreciation of God as creator. This sometimes becomes a debate about whether God really did create the world in six days and then rest on the seventh. Scientific thinking, alongside an understanding of evolution and geological timescales seems to suggest that the world is wonderfully complex and in many ways quite breathtaking. It is estimated in a book that I browsed through recently that the solar system and the formation of the earth began some 4550 million years ago and the first signs of life in rocks can be found 2400 million years ago. As I was reading this I came across a reference to how light years are used to measure distance in space and the distances involved are quite staggering.

The mystery of the Biblical reflections on creation is that in the vastness and diversity of the world people still matter. Some environmentalists want to take that a stage further and say that all species should matter and we are responsible for caring for the world that we share. Environmental issues are also political with debate on climate change and pollution raising issues that impact on everyone. Whatever way you might want to interpret the book of Genesis there is a reference to humans being

having "dominion" over God's creation. This has been used to justify exploiting nature for the betterment of human beings, but increasingly in recent years this approach has been questioned and seen as morally dubious. A better interpretation is that humans are "stewards" of God's creation and we are asked to care and value what is around us. If people are treated as commodities and as dispensable eventually there will be a reaction and a demand for change. If the natural world is used in the same way then the consequences can only be harmful and possibly irreversible. We may be small people in a huge universe, but a reoccurring theme in the Biblical story is that the actions of a few can have huge consequences for the many. As spring finally breaks through I find that very encouraging.

Rev Jonathan Gordon

Forthcoming Event

Multi-award-winning folk duo **Ninebarrow** – Jon Whitley and Jay LaBouchardiere – are impressing audiences across the country with their innovative and captivating take on the folk tradition.

See them perform at
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Tickets are available for £15 each from [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) or from www.ninebarrow.co.uk/stbartholomews or www.stbartholomewschurch.org/concerts-and-outings

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St Mary's Church Fete: Saturday 7th July – we need your help!

Arrangements for our summer fete are well underway – all the old favourites such as the Hemel Hempstead Band, the BBQ and the bottle stall will be there along with some new surprises. Like last year it will run from 12.30pm to 4pm and this year will raise money for Phakamisa, The Swan Youth Project, Northchurch United Charities and the Roof Fund. Please make a note of the date in your diaries now and encourage your family and friends to come along for a great family day out.

A new addition this year is a Tug 'O' War competition on the school field. More details to follow but why not start organising your team of 6-8 members now and get training?!!

The fete organising committee would be grateful for your help collecting items for the fete, and with offers to help on the day. Items we are looking for include:

- Donations of **bottles** (all kinds – but in date and full please).
- **Tombola prizes/Gifts and Toiletries Stall** items – new, good quality items are needed for both the tombola and gift stall. This year we are holding a Princess Lucky Dip so we would love donations of new small prizes that we can use for this.
- **Raffle prizes**
- **Gift bags – small** - used or unused gift bags for the Grab-a-Bag stall.
- **Children's toys** – we are looking for good quality and clean unused or second-hand children's toys, books

and games.

- Items for the **Nearly New Stall** (White Elephant). Please can we urge you only to donate good quality items – it's a lot of work to dispose of items that are not suitable to sell.
- Good quality second hand **Books**.
- **Plants and garden Items**: Bring along on the day.
- **Cakes** – these are needed for both the cake stall and the Refreshments – these can be home-made or shop bought.

Do you live on a prominent road and if so, would you be prepared to have an estate agent board in your front garden to advertise the fete. Please let Jonathan know – revjagordon@gmail.com

Offer to help on the day – if you aren't already involved, and can spare some time either the day before to set up or on the day itself to help on a stall, please email Margit Dobbie margit@gameplaneurope.com

Please leave any non-perishable items at the back of the church and bring plants, cakes and any larger good quality items for the Nearly New Stall along on the day.

If you have any questions, please speak to Margit, Evelyn, Rachel, Jonathan or Linda in church or email margit@gameplaneurope.com

Thank you for your help – we can make this a great fete with your help.

Church Fete Plant Stall

For those of you getting busy in your gardens now that we are having some warmer days, we would be extremely grateful for any surplus garden plants/seedlings/pots/garden containers/sundry garden items for the plant stall at our Church Fete. Collection can be arranged, or items can be brought along on the morning of the Fete.

Please call Vanessa Hudson on 879646 or Diane Whitaker on 875543. Thank you.



Well Done Northchurch Go20

For a village of approximately 2,500 what a remarkable feat it is to have gathered 2,160 signatures on the petition organised by the Go20 group. This is a tribute to the hard work and tenacity of all involved. It's great that so many took the time and trouble to sign the petition, reflecting the genuinely caring nature of our community.

The petition was presented to a full meeting of the Hertfordshire County Council on 27 March. Unfortunately, due to it being Easter week, key members of Go20 were on holiday, so I had the honour of presenting the petition on their behalf. This really focused my mind on why Northchurch is a special case: Much of Northchurch High street is within a conservation zone, meaning that road widening has simply not been possible. We have two rows of Victorian terraced homes facing each other on the High Street. They do not have internal hallways and open directly onto the pavement. With young families in many of these homes, there can be no better argument for road safety improvements.

A major obstacle to the improvements proposed by Go20 has been Herts County Council policy. This currently does not allow 20 MPH zones in **rural** areas: which is why Berkhamsted, an urban area, has a 20mph zone starting outside the Sports Centre, a mile down the road.

Due to the high number of signatures, it was possible for HCC to carry a motion, supported across the whole council, for a review of existing policy to enable the vital words **with exceptions** to be introduced into the policy on rural roads. So there is more flexibility to take the unique character of Northchurch into account. This means another step has been taken on the journey to safer roads for our families and neighbours. The council has now been authorised to carry out further traffic studies with a view to implementing the 20mph zone.

In the meantime, Northchurch Parish Council has set up a road traffic committee. I hope to liaise with residents about what other road safety improvements could be made.

The Go20 group is looking for members to help increase awareness of the need to drive carefully. In particular anyone who lives on the High Street or New Road and who would be willing to put up a garden board should get in touch with info@northchurchgo20.org. Or you can contact me on laraprangle@yahoo.co.uk.

Many thanks

Cllr Lara Pringle

Make a note in your diary!

St Mary's Church Fete on Saturday 7th July 2018
12.30 to 4.00pm.

See you there :-)

The Monday Club

Outing to Chenies Manor: Wednesday 6th June. The coach will leave Northchurch at 2pm.

For more information please contact: Joan Downhill on 865821 or Barbara Lloyd on 865059.

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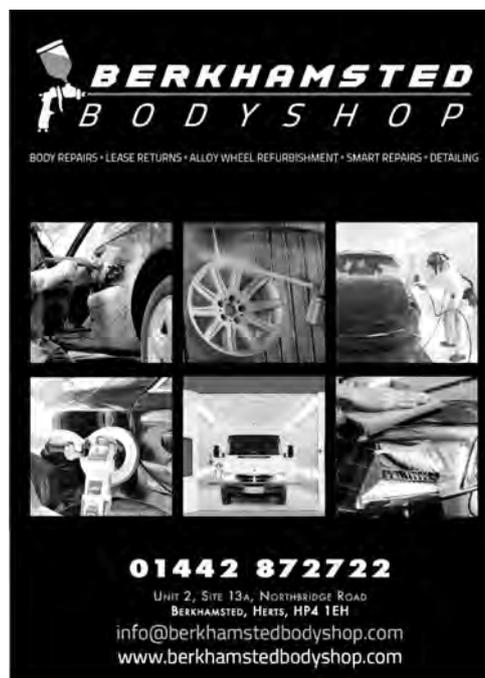
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This month in 1889 ...

This month in 1889, a memorial window dedicated to the late Reverend Arthur Smart Loxley was installed in the South Transept of St Mary's church. Arthur was educated at Radley College in Abingdon and later at Exeter College, Oxford, graduating in 1868. Having initially deciding on a career as a solicitor like his father, John Loxley, Arthur became an Articled Clerk, but it was not long before he decided to follow his maternal grandfather's calling and join the Anglican clergy. The 1871 Census records Arthur living at Norcott Court near Dudswell and described as 'Deacon in Holy Orders, Curate of Northchurch'. The following year he became a priest. A keen cricket player, Arthur was also a good musician and had a particularly strong interest in church music.

Through his connections in the Church, Arthur met Alice Mary Duncombe, the daughter of Reverend William Duncombe. They were married at Watton, Norfolk in 1873, just after Arthur had become the Curate of Lampport church in Northamptonshire. It was here that their first son, Arthur Noel Loxley, was born in October 1874.



In 1876, Arthur became a Minor Canon and Librarian at Gloucester Cathedral and later, the Vicar of nearby Fairford. It was at Fairford, that Arthur's remaining children were born. At Fairford, Arthur was known for his eloquent preaching and for organising various music festivals.

Arthur's health started to decline in the mid 1880s and he died on 2nd April 1888. Family tradition has it that he suffered a heart attack following the playing on a cornet at a local hunt ball. Arthur's body was brought back to Northchurch and, following his funeral, was buried in the churchyard.

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**St Mary's Church Fete:
Saturday 7th July**



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8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist
6.00pm Evening Prayer at St Bart's

13th May *The Sunday after Ascension*

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am All Age Service
6.00pm Evening Prayer

20th May *Pentecost Sunday*

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist
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27th May *Trinity Sunday*

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Northchurch News from Terry Douris

Along with my Highways Officers at HCC we met with representatives of the 20mph action group to consider what actions might be possible to reduce the speed of traffic through the village. The area presents considerable challenges, but officers are aware of residents' concerns. I am aware that the Parish Council is considering a further Speed Indicator Device around The Meads.

Subsequently, a petition was presented at the Hertfordshire County Council meeting on 18th March which prompted a motion which was then debated relating, in particular, to the potential for a 20mph zone and requesting a review of the HCC Speed Management Strategy which governs how we manage our roads in the county. The effect of this motion which was agreed is that there could be exceptions to the strategy which will allow the stretch of the A4251 through Northchurch to come into line with the centre of Berkhamsted.

In my role as Cabinet Member for Localism, I sit on the board of the Hertfordshire Community Foundation which distributes grants of up to £10,000 from benefactors' funds and from the County Council to worthy causes which are making a difference in the community. One such is a group with the wonderful title of Electric Umbrella whose aim is to challenge the perception of people with learning disabilities by empowering and enriching lives through music. It is a collaboration of professional musicians and adults with learning disabilities to write, experience and perform music at small pubs, big festivals, live radio and everything in between.

Finally, the Herts show takes place at the showground in Redbourn on Saturday and Sunday 26^{/27th} May. It is always a great event with lots to see for the whole family. Hertfordshire County Council will be exhibiting again and will feature the annual school's art competition together with a range of interesting, informative and fun activities. You can also meet a County Councillor and find out more about what the Council's role. I recall that we are frequently blessed with good weather, so it should be a great day out.

Don't forget you can always contact me on 01442 402273 or by email at terry.douris@hertfordshire.gov.uk

All church enquiries to:
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