

Dear Friends,

This year looks to be a year of competitions. Not only this country but several others have General Elections. Then there are football championships, cricket cups, tennis trophies, country shows, gardens, cakes, sheepdog trials and many other competitions, all with one aim - to win. All demand preparation, training, discipline and consistency to win first prize. 2nd and 3rd might be comforting results but they are not the ultimate prize, the target, the satisfaction of being the winner. There may not be money prizes in the Olympic Games but the accolade, the reputation, the fame are the intangible rewards for years of self-denial and determination and the self-congratulation of achievement.

Our faith journey is like a race where effort and focus count to follow God's purpose for our lives. "Don't you realise that in a race everyone runs but only one person gets the prize? So run to win", wrote St Paul (1 Corinthians 9, 24). The strength to run this spiritual marathon comes from God. It is a marathon, not a sprint. Our training includes the discipline of reading the Bible every day for encouragement, endurance and hope. Other essential qualities are patience to stay the course and perseverance. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" , (Hebrews 12, 1-2).

We will not be judged because we did not run but whether we stripped off every weight that slows us, the sin that trips us up and diverts us. We must not turn back but try, faithful to the end, for the olive wreath at the finishing post. Will we, like Timothy (2 Timothy 4, 6-8) rejoice to say, "I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness".

Who will cheer us on?

*Best wishes,
Gillian*

Family Services - The Water of Life

July 14th - Sharing a scarce resource Genesis 13, 1-13

Everyday life in Mesopotamia in BC700 was of families living in large tents with their flocks and herds nearby. That meant a constant search for water for grazing.

Abram and his nephew Lot were rich with sheep, goats and cattle. Quarrels broke out among the herdsmen over sources of water. Abram decided that the only solution was to separate. He gave Lot the choice. When Lot looked up and around he saw the well-watered plain of the River Jordan and took his animals there. Abram stayed in the hill country and God promised to give him the whole land.

How would you resolve a disagreement?

August 11th - Known to God Genesis 21, 14-20

Abraham sent Hagar, his Egyptian slave, away into the wilderness of Beersheba with his young son Ishmael. He gave her some food and a leather bag of water. When the water was gone she despaired of keeping her son alive and put him under a distant bush to die.

God heard their crying. Who told her to open her eyes and see the well nearby?

God knows our needs and will answer our prayers.



Bell-ringing a sport or a hobby?

Although we don't normally think of bellringing as a competitive sport, bands of ringers do pit themselves against other teams from time to time, both at the local level and more widely. Ringing is organised into Guilds – usually based on the diocese – which may be subdivided into smaller groups usually known as “branches” or “districts”. We are part of the North Bucks branch of the Oxford Guild, and the branch stretches from Tingewick and Shalstone in the west to Olney and Lavendon in the east. Ideally a team consists of the regular ringers from a particular church, but these days many bands (like ourselves) draw ringers from other local churches to make up the numbers.



In the competitions (known as “striking contests”), each team is allowed two minutes to practise and get the “feel” of the bells. They then “stand” – i.e. stop ringing – then signal to the judge that they are about to begin their test piece by ringing four blows on the treble. The test piece is usually about five minutes long, and exactly what is rung varies between competitions. Sometimes it is specified; sometimes the choice is left to the teams.

The judge is always an experienced and respected ringer, who must listen intently for the whole of each test piece. He or she must assess every blow to judge whether it is too early or too late in relation to the other bells, and note each mistake by each bell. The mistakes, or faults, are also graded as slight or severe, and the slight errors counted as half faults. Clearly, this is a very demanding task. The faults are added up, and the teams ranked accordingly. When the test piece is not specified, no account is taken of the difficulty of the piece: the teams are expected to choose something they expect to be able to ring at their best.



On 1st June 2024 the North Bucks branch held our annual striking contest at Stowe. Six teams entered, including our local ringers – “Buckingham and Stowe”. The team from Shenley & Loughton came first; we came fourth behind two teams from Padbury, and ahead of teams from Woughton on the Green and Great Linford. We were pleased with the result, but it was of less significance than being part of the occasion. These competitions are a good opportunity to mix with ringing colleagues from quite a wide area. It was a friendly and enjoyable evening, enhanced by our ability to provide tea and cake from the servery.

The socialising with colleagues is at least as important as comparing one's standard of ringing with theirs.

LG

Thank you for this very interesting insight into the ancient art of bell-ringing. How I love coming to Stowe Parish Church on the first and fifth Sunday of every month and to hear the bells. As a child, when not knowing any different, when the ringers began 'ringing down' and a single bell would sound we always called this the 'hurry up bell' if we were still 'dawdling'!



Heavenly Father,
Make each moment of our lives a miracle.
Make us laugh at the impossible.
Give us hope when all things seem hopeless
Peace, where no peace could be;
Love for the unlovable.
Make us gamble all on your almightiness
and dare everything in your great service.



The Stowe wedding of Joanna Meredith and Paul Jackson on 20th June 2024

Photo credit: Adrian Jackson Photography

A prayer written by David Carter (Heather Meredith's father) for the conclusion of a Service at Northease Manor School (where he was Founder-Headmaster), December 1969.

STOWE PARISH COUNCIL



If you wish to contact the parish council please email info@stowepc.uk or contact one of the seven councillors in the village, whose details can be found under the [Councillors](#) page.

Just a reminder that the annual **British Grand Prix** is scheduled to take place at Silverstone on the 6th and 7th July. Please remember that there will be extra traffic and diversions over this weekend from the 5th July.





Dadford WI was formed in 1946 and has met every month since with the exception of Covid. We are a happy, friendly little group with a speaker most months.

"Our June meeting had an unusual twist when we welcomed two unexpected guests. Sisters visiting the UK for a family reunion, one from Canada and one from South Africa. But Doreen and Sylvia are the daughters of the late Flo and Ted Hawkins. Both Flo and Ted lived in Dadford with their young family who attended the local school in the Village Hall.

Flo was a founder member of our WI and Ted a well known Villager. So with scrapbooks and Hall photos many memories were rekindled.

Dadford WI's next meeting is on 11th July, 'Stories from the Shelf', with Alison from Buckingham University bookshop. And on 8th August we will meet in Hilary and Chris Hawkins beautiful garden for afternoon tea.

Look forward to seeing you soon,
Loreen



What's been happening at St. James and St. John Church of England Primary School

St. James and St. John School is a one-form entry school located in two villages. Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 children are taught at the infant site in Akeley and Year 3 up to Year 6 are taught at the junior site in Chackmore.

As we head towards the end of the Summer Term, we look back and celebrate the year behind us. But first we are delighted to share that St James and St John Church of England Primary School have received a 'good' judgement with 'outstanding' Early Years provision, by Ofsted in our latest inspection. The full copy of the report is on the school website (www.stjamesjohn.com/ofsted-and-performance) or through the official Ofsted website.

Looking back at this half term, in June, the Year 4s enjoyed a two night residential trip to Everdon, undertaking various environmental inspired activities such as pond dipping, marshmallow toasting, shelter building and even a two mile walk. Back at school, there were the annual traditions of class photos and the whole school Sports Day and family picnic. We were pleased to welcome lots of male relatives to our Marvellous Men assemblies at Chackmore and Akeley, where we celebrated all those Marvellous Men in our lives. Children from Years 3/4 and 5/6 attended cricket festivals, whilst children from Year 1/2 took part in an athletics tournament, and the staff all enjoyed judging the finals of the Chackmore cooking competition.

Further events from the PTFA this half term include a talent show, to showcase the talents of the children, a family picnic event with games, and a colour run at the end of the term. Not to mention more Ice-pole Fridays when the weather brightens up!

As the end of the school year comes ever closer, the children will all have time in their new classroom with their new teacher, to help their transition to the next school year. We look forward to welcoming our September intake into the Foundation Stage at Akeley too. Our current Year 2 children will be moving up to become our Year 3 class at the Chackmore site. At the end of the term we will celebrate all their hard work and growth by reflecting back on their time at our Akeley site in a special moving-up assembly.

This is also the time of year where we reflect back on our Year Six pupils and their journey with us, whilst we celebrate the end of their time at St James and St John. As well as their joint Performance with Year 5 to look forward to, the Year 6 children will also take part in the Year 6 Games, have a mini enterprise competition, enjoy a special leaving disco and have a campout to celebrate their time with us. The finale of all this is an extra special assembly at the end of term (year 6 parents, remember those tissues!). We wish all our Year 6 children the very best at their new school!

Heading into the holidays, we wish all our pupils, staff and friends of St James and St John a happy and safe summer and look forward to seeing you all in September!

Holiday Club is making a comeback! From 5th -9th August Buckingham Parish Church will be hosting a traditional Holiday Club with some other local Churches. This will not be possible without your help, please add the date to your diary and if you can support them in volunteering email Abi on kids@bpcholidayclub.org.uk

Confirmation: If anyone would like to be confirmed in 2024 please contact the parish office asap.
Email: office@nbpchurches.org.uk or phone:01280 814430

Pastoral Visits
If anyone requires a pastoral visit from Rev Hans Taling or Rev Cathy Pearce please contact North Bucks Parish Office – email: office@nbpchurches.org.uk or phone: 01280 814430

Date	Warden/Sidespeople	Prayers	Refreshments
Jul 7th	Andrew Rudolf Chris Close-Smith	Liturgy	Kay Murray
Jul 14th	Nancy Pullin		Nancy Pullin
Jul 14th	<i>Evensong in Dadford Cemetery Chapel</i>	Gillian Macdonald	
Jul 21st	Tamara & John Kimpton	Tamara Kimpton	Germaine Radcliffe
Jul 28th	Richard & Essex Close-Smith	Tony Meredith	Gillian Macdonald
Aug 4th	Laurence Gibson Lyn & Ray East	Liturgy	Lyn East
Aug 11th	Richard Close-Smith		Tamara Kimpton
Aug 11th	<i>Evensong in Dadford Cemetery Chapel</i>		
Aug 18th	Andrew Rudolf Patricia Forbes	Gillian Macdonald	Elsbeth Mullineux
Aug 25th	Tamara & John Kimpton	Gill Smith	Kay Murray

Date	Flowers	Cleaning	Prayer-board
Jul 7th	Kay Murray	Lyn and Ray East	Tamara Kimpton
Jul 14th	Hilary Hawkins		John Kimpton
Jul 21st	Loreen Williams		Gillian Macdonald
Jul 28th	Rosie Cowdy	Nancy Pullin and Hazlewoods	Gill Smith
Aug 4th	Gillian Macdonald		Kay Murray
Aug 11th	Heather Meredith		Lyn East
Aug 18th	Lyn East	Neil and Susan Fraser Smith	Tamara Kimpton
Aug 25th	Kay Murray		John Kimpton

Date	Time	Service	Lead/Preach	Chalice
Jul 7th	09:45	1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	Andrew Rudolf
Jul 14th	09:45	Family Service	Kay Murray	
	18:00	<i>Evensong in Dadford Cemetery Chapel</i>	Gillian Macdonald	
Jul 21st	09:45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Lyn East
Jul 28th	09:45	Morning Prayer	L - Andrew Rudolf P - Tom Harrison	
Aug 4th	09:45	1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	John Kimpton
Aug 11th	09:45	Family Service	Dave Pearce	
	18:00	<i>Evensong in Dadford Cemetery Chapel</i>	Andrew Rudolf	
Aug 18th	09:45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Andrew Rudolf
Aug 25th	09:45	Morning Prayer	L - Gillian Macdonald P - Keith Croxton	