



Benefice Newsletter April 2025



From Revd Karen

At last we are seeing some sunshine! After a long dark winter brighter days might finally be here. We have a busy month around the Benefice with Holy Week and Easter Services in the churches as well as the start of our wedding season. This year we have twelve weddings and blessings around the Benefice. It is always a delight to welcome couples and their families into these working churches and celebrate the beginning of their married lives together.

The tourists who come to see our beautiful North Cotswold landscape really appreciate our open churches. They notice the peace and the history of the place. I suspect they often miss that these are working churches that are places of worship with their own congregations and life. I am so very grateful to all of you that keep these buildings open and well cared for. You can feel whether a building is loved when you walk through the door. Visitors often comment about the stillness and peace of St Edward's. The visitors' books say the same of the village churches. Our churches are more than just stone and tile. They are living worshipping communities that are cared for and loved in a practical way and through prayer. Thank you for your care and may your Easter be one of celebration that our Lord is Risen.

Blessing

God of rising sun, embrace us
God of mist and rain, refresh us
God of flowing stream, revive us
God of gentle breeze, speak to us
God of day and night-time, hear us
God of tears and laughter, bless us
God of love and power, uphold us
Your children and our family, we pray
@John Birch

Benefice Contacts

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Website and Social Media for St Edward's

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14393/>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/people/St-Edwards-Church-Stow-on-the-Wold/61566790355827/>

Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/st_wards_stow/

IMPORTANT NOTICE Electoral Roll Review

This year we must compile a new Church Electoral Roll, as the Church Representation Rules require a completely new electoral roll for each parish every 6 years. Huge thanks go to Derek Magson for 20 years as our Electoral Roll Officer at St Edward's. Derek is now stepping down; thank you to Sue Lipthorpe for taking on this role.

Focus on.....Hospitality



This month, Lindsay has been leading our hospitality at St Edward's. In her own words...

Lent is a time for prayer, contemplation and restraint. I love a glass of wine and in this heady, secular world we live in I find it easy to over indulge so I give up alcohol for Lent: I wouldn't do it for anyone else ... only Jesus! This year, however, is different because I have decided to take something on rather than give something up. Karen informs us that Sundays, during this period, are actually feast days and it is my absolute pleasure to provide refreshments after our church service during Lent. This small act is proving to be such a welcome and effective way of bringing us all together in fellowship in the name of Jesus.



NEWS (with a twist of humour)

Church Lighting

How many Anglicans does it take to change a lightbulb?

Ten. One to change the lightbulb, three to observe, one to apply for the faculty and five to run the fete committee to raise the funds to pay for it.....

The new lights in the chancel at St Edward's are looking really good and we are very thankful to Buzz Electrical for getting the work done in less than a fortnight. There is some more work to do in April. We then have to research new lighting in the nave and apply for a faculty. This will take time and the earliest we can expect it to be finished is October 2025.

As the joke above implies we do need to get funds to pay for this work. Some may be obtained through grants but the rest will need to come through fundraising if we do not want to deplete our shrinking reserves.

NEWS

Funerals

At the time of writing there are two funerals in church. On 9th April at 12.30pm we say goodbye to Wendy Smith. On 22nd April St Edward's are hosting the memorial service to remember the life of David Dugdale of Icomb.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Concerts

Talks are ongoing for a concert series this summer. Some would be by donation and others would be fundraisers. These are wonderful events but can be volunteer intensive to run. If you could volunteer some time to serve drinks or help set up and tidy up afterwards that would be very welcome.

Spring Clean

The grounds and the outside of St Edward's church could do with a spring clean. There is a lot of moss on the walls of the church and some of the graves at the front of the church could do with weeding. If you have kept some snowdrops back these could be planted on Saturday 12th April from 2-4pm. Tea and cake will of course be available.

News from our local schools



Organist Adam and Revd Karen were in Stow Primary and Swell Primary last week. Adam taught the children some songs and Revd Karen helped them make posies for Mothering Sunday.

The singing was very high quality and the children had a lot of fun creating flower arrangements for their mums and grandmas. We are very grateful to

Allium of Stow and Batsford Arboretum for their generous assistance with the flowers.



Services

Mondays (not Easter Monday) 9am Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edwards

Sunday 6th April 10.30am

Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow

Sunday 6th April 2pm

Wedding Blessing, St Edward's Stow

Sunday 13th April 9.15am

BCP Matins for Palm Sunday, St Nicholas Condicote

Sunday 13th April 10.30am

Holy Communion for Palm Sunday, St Edward's Stow

Sunday 13th April 11am

Lay Led Matins, St Mary's Upper Swell

Sunday 13th April 2.30pm

Dementia Friendly Service, Edwardstow Court

Thursday 17th April 11.00 am

Holy Communion, Newlands Court

Thursday 17th April 6.30pm

Maundy Thursday Service St Edward's Stow

Friday 18th April 2pm

Good Friday Service St Edward's Stow

Saturday 19th April 8pm

Easter Vigil Service, St Nicholas Condicote

Sunday 20th April 9.15am

Family Service for Easter Day, St Mary's Lower Swell

Sunday 20th April 10.30 am

Holy Communion for Easter Day, St Edward's Stow

Sunday 27th April 9.15am

BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote

Sunday 27th April 10.30 am

Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 2nd April 6.45pm for 7pm start - Film Night in St Edward's Church – Conclave

Saturday 12th April from 2-4pm – Spring Clean of the churchyard with tea and cake

Sunday 18th May after the service – APCM, St Edward's Church

Regular Events

Closely Knit - 10am-noon every Saturday in the Church.

Mother's Union - first Thursday of the month 2.00pm in the Church Room.

Cotswold Dementia Café Every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month, 2-4pm at the Baptist Church Hall off Back Walls. A community café offering friendship, support, advice and more for anyone living with or caring for someone with dementia.