



Benefice Newsletter June 2025



From Revd Karen

This is my second summer in the North Cotswolds and I'm only just realising how busy it gets here. The Friday Fosseway carpark really is a thing!

It has been a real pleasure to be in the church and welcome visitors from all over the world. In Fair Week the weather was glorious so we don't just get visitors who are getting out of the rain. Some visitors just nod and walk past when greeted, but many want to talk about the church, their faith and their concerns to the vicar avoiding writing the sermon. Many admire the kneelers in St Edward's and the loving care and attention as well as the creativity that went into their creation. My thanks go out to Peter, Ingrid and Joy who were in church in Fair Week to greet visitors. It was very much a last minute decision to do this but showed how many visitors we get and how willing they are to ask questions. My question is how this might be sustained over the summer season. How can we engage with the people who travel to see us? Sometimes a simple greeting and warm welcome can be where a journey of faith begins. How might we build on that?

Blessing for Pentecost

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit
that my thoughts may all be
holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit
that my works, too, may be
holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit
that I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit
to defend that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit
that I always may be holy.
St. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

At St Edward's we have been given the bad news that our North Chancel Roof is in a poorer state of repair than we believed. This follows hard upon the need to replace much of the wiring in the church. We will update you when we have more information.

Benefice Contacts

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Condicote:
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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_edwards_stow/

Online services links

1 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd010625>
8 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd080625>
15 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd150625>
22 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd220625>
29 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd290625>

Focus on...the Rectory Cats

Four cats live in the Rectory. The three in this picture are all related and came from a farm in the New Forest. The short haired tabby is either the half-sister or aunt to the other two.



They are Skye, Fleur and Clio. They did not enjoy moving to Stow and sang the song of their people all the way from West London but they are loving life in the North Cotswolds. In our last Vicarage there were urban foxes which were breeding under next door's shed and, in our final year, in the Vicarage Garden. This was very stressful for the girls who became scared of going outside. In Stow they have a large garden and no resident cats or foxes to worry them.

During lock down I fostered kittens for a local charity. At one point there were nine cats in the house which was far too many. Clio (the black cat) fell in love with the first litter of six black kittens and would have liked us to keep all of them. This one is Lily. They arrived the week of the Hampton Court Flower Show so they all had flower names. We fostered around forty kittens over two years. Did you know it is hard to find adopters for black kittens? This may be because they are hard to photograph. The photo of Lily was taken by a friend of my youngest son who shows what is possible with patience and a good camera.



Celebrations



In 2025 we have eight weddings and blessings around the benefice. In May we celebrated the weddings of Kirby and Jonathan at St Edward's and Zoe and Martin in St Nicholas'. In June we are looking forward to the wedding of Joe and Ami at St Edward's. We also have a wedding and a baptism at St Mary's Lower Swell.

It is always a joy to celebrate these life events in our churches.

Visiting organists

Last Saturday a group of organists from the Birmingham and Worcester area were visiting the Cotswolds and stopped off to play at St Edward's.

They were very impressed with the organ and it was fascinating to hear it played outside of a service. If you join our WhatsApp group you can hear one of the pieces played.



Fundraising



Closely Knit continue apace and are providing a very generous contribution alongside welcoming visitors on a Saturday morning.



It's a vital part of keeping our church up and running (and warm in winter). Do you have any ideas for fundraising? A calendar has been mentioned...speak to Revd Karen with your suggestions. All will be considered!

Communications

Karen and Elizabeth continue the battle to get to grips with our social media accounts! If you or someone you know is an expert particularly on Instagram please point them towards Elizabeth...

Do join our WhatsApp community to keep up to date with what is going on (and the gossip!) It is very easy to join using the QR code opposite.



Services

Mondays 9.00 am	Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edward's Stow
Sunday 1 st June 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow with bells before the service
Sunday 1 st June 2.00pm	Baptism service St Mary's Lower Swell
Sunday 1 st June 4.00pm	Picnic at St Mary's Lower Swell
Sunday 8 th June 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 8 th June 10.30am	Pentecost Celebration, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 15 th June 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 15 th June 10.30 am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Thursday 19 th June 1.00pm	Wedding at St Edward's Stow
Sunday 22 nd June 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 22 nd June 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 22 nd June 2.30pm	Dementia Friendly Service, Edwardstow Court
Sunday 29 th June 10.30 am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Monday 30 th June 1.30pm	Wedding, St Edward's Stow

Dates for your diary

Thursday 5th June - North Cotswold Deanery Mothers' Union Quiet Hour at 2pm in St Edward's. All welcome.

Wednesday 11th June – Quarter Peal by visiting bellringers

Saturday 14th June 7.30pm – Michael Omer and Friends – Piano Jazz-Cabaret

Wednesday 18th June 7.30pm - Alistair McGowan '3 in 1' - Music, Poetry and Comedy from one of Britain's best-known actors and comic impressionists

Sunday 29th June 3-5pm - Cellissimo (Five Cellos) Afternoon Tea Concert

SAVE THE DATE Friday 25th July – Lumos concert – details to follow

Friday 15th August 7.30pm – Piano recital – Tyler Hay – a mixed programme of popular and some less well known works by a Leeds International Piano Competition competitor

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.