



Church and Community Newsletter June 2026



From Revd Karen

It's really good to be back after a month of holiday and study leave. I'm now over halfway through my time at Stow and with Marion, our new director of operations starting in June, it has been a really good opportunity to take some time out to reflect on the ministry and theology of welcome.

I've been visiting churches and cathedrals deep undercover. With no clerical collar I'm just a random person who decided to pop into the church. One of the first challenges was to work out when a church is open. Some are open from 9-5pm. Others are open for a few hours a day or a couple of hours on a couple of days a week. Other churches are only open for services on a Sunday. Some churches that open are stewarded and others are not. Finding out the times of services in some village churches has been another challenge.

Some churches had welcome desks with a mix of voluntary and paid staff. Others had bookshops or tea shops. Some had been running these for years and others were relatively new.

At Chester Cathedral my dance group was only one of the groups in the cathedral which was also hosting a 'Beatles by Candlelight' concert, rehearsals by an excellent amateur choir and a major textile exhibition – 'Threads Through Creation' (picture above). We had to make it work and learn to be generous when we found ourselves in shared space.

Each church is responding to its location. What is possible in Oxford City Centre would not be possible in a village church. Some churches had been working on their welcome for thirty years and others were starting to think about what they might offer.

What we do really well at St Edward's is tell people that they are welcome. I spent some time with an academic in faith and tourism research before I went on my month's study leave. We were able to ask visitors if they found the church welcoming and they mostly said yes. When asked why they pointed to the big sheep banner with welcome in lots of languages and the Coventry Cathedral welcome notice by the door.

All of the churches I visited were old. We are relative newcomers being founded in the 10th century. All the churches/cathedrals were responding to changes in the world around them. There is a lot of reflect on in the next few months.

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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

7 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd070626>
14 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd140626>
21 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd210626>
28 June: <https://bit.ly/StEd280626>

Blessing

May God be with you and bless you.
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, rich
in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward

(An Old Wedding Blessing)

From our friends at Edwardstow Court

A Heartfelt Thank You to Rev Karen Wellman

The residents, families and staff at Edwardstow Court would like to express our sincere gratitude to Rev Karen Wellman and everyone from St Edward's Church who support the monthly Dementia Friendly service held at Edwardstow.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to our volunteer Tanya, whose support and kindness in assisting with the service each month is greatly appreciated by residents and staff alike.

These services are always warmly welcomed and greatly valued by our residents, especially those who are no longer able to attend church in person. For many, faith and worship have been an important part of their lives for decades, and the opportunity to continue sharing in Holy Communion, familiar hymns, prayers, and fellowship brings enormous comfort, reassurance, and joy.

Rev Karen's gentle and inclusive approach helps create a calm and welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels valued and able to participate in their own way. The service not only nurtures spiritual wellbeing, but also encourages connection, memories, and a sense of belonging for residents living with dementia.

We are also pleased that this special service is open to members of the local community who may wish to attend.

For more information, please email g.joynes@osjct.co.uk or call 01451 799100.

We are truly thankful for the kindness, dedication, and time given each month to make these services possible. They mean far more than words can express to so many within our Edwardstow community.

Matthew Peach
General Manager, Edwardstow Court

Edwardstow also have a number of community focussed events which all are welcome to attend. Some of these are regular monthly events, some require booking and some are one-offs. They are now flagged in our "Dates for your Diary" but a bit more info below:

Baby and Toddler Group: The team at Edwardstow is excited to launch a brand new Baby & Toddler Group in our bistro as part of our ongoing commitment to intergenerational connection and community engagement. Join us for a fun-filled morning of arts and crafts, story time and singing. Snacks will be provided. It's a wonderful opportunity for the youngest members of our community to connect with the older generation in a warm and welcoming environment. It is on the first Wednesday of each month and all are welcome – come along and share in the joy!

For more information call 01451 799100 or email: g.joynes@osjct.co.uk

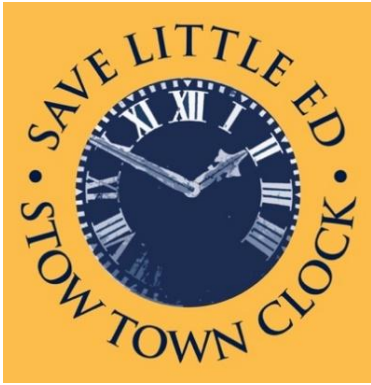
Fish & Chip Lunch Club: At Edwardstow Court we believe community matters. Our residents love welcoming new faces and staying connected with the wider community. So, on the first Friday of every month, we invite you to join us for fish and chips.

- Enjoy freshly prepared food
- Share conversation and companionship
- Relax in a warm, friendly home-from-home setting

If you're feeling a little lonely, new to the area, or would simply enjoy meeting new people, you'll find a kind welcome here. **Booking essential – limited places available**

To book your place call 01451 799100 or email: g.joynes@osjct.co.uk

Little Ed Ticks Towards Target



The fundraising campaign to 'Save Little Ed – the Stow Town Clock' has hit the £20,500 mark. The race to save the clock is now ticking towards its £25,000 target which will fund the restoration of the clock face and repairs to the clock's mechanism.

Spring has seen a big boost to fundraising for Little Ed, which sits on St Edward's Church tower overlooking Stow-on-the-Wold's town square. Little Ed has received generous donations this spring from Alun White, of Stow; Rev Walter Barbour, who lived at Newlands and who has moved to Cambridgeshire; Stow and District Civic Society, Stow Cotswold Festival, Mangersbury Residents Association and many other individuals. Thank you to everyone who has donated. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

St Edward's Church now has a fabulous new artwork to showcase our fundraising campaign. Thank you to Stow News & Post Office who refurbished Ben Edolls's church tower from the WW1 commemorations and to Di Close who created the knitted version of what Little Ed will look like when his face is repaired and his numbers replaced. Keith Davies secured the knitted Little Ed to the tower.

Di Close (pictured here with her splendid knitted and crocheted clock) said: 'I was challenged to knit Little Ed for our fabulous artwork and it was quite a challenge! I decided to knit the clockface and crochet the Roman numerals. I'm absolutely thrilled with the way it looks on the tower and I hope it encourages more people to help save Little Ed, our precious town clock.'

Please do take time to have a look at the tower in the church. The artist who painted the tower wishes to remain anonymous but explained his thoughts about the work:



'The artwork is about the church, Closely Knit and the community that keeps it together. The philosophy of the work is - St Edward's: Time Held in Community. This piece is not a portrait of a building; it illustrates stewardship across time.'

The faint clocks embedded along the left wall speak for the unseen generations whose labour, care and quiet faith have sustained St Edward's Church. They are deliberately subdued, almost dissolving into the surface, because legacy is rarely loud, yet always foundational.

Rising through the centre, the sequence of fractured clocks forms a living barometer. They move from brokenness toward restoration, anticipating the knitted clock. Born not of machinery, but of hands. This progression reflects a community in motion: from inherited responsibility to present participation. The clocks will ultimately measure not time, but collective will, the gathering of small contributions into shared renewal.

The technique reinforces this philosophy. Dry brushing resists dominance; it blends rather than declares, mirroring a community where no single stroke defines the whole. Likewise, the disciplined palette - refraining from the use of black and white - rejects absolutes. Form emerges instead through primary truth

(red, yellow, blue) and relational harmony (green, ochre). Meaning is not imposed; it is built through interaction.

In essence, the painting proposes that preservation is not an act of the past, but a living covenant. Time does not simply pass through St Edward's - it is held, repaired, and re-authored by those willing to belong to it.'



The Closely Knit fundraising team had a successful time at the 550 celebrations in Stow on Sunday, May 24th. The day marked the 550th Anniversary of our Royal Charter for two fairs granted by Edward IVth in 1476. Sue Liphthorpe and the Closely Knit team organised a prize draw which raised £839 and the sale of delicious tea, cake and scones in St Edward's raised £280.

So far, the sale of Closely Knit's wonderful knitted

and crocheted goods in church has raised more than £9,500 towards saving the clock which is truly amazing. Well done! Tremendous work.

Looking further ahead, we are thrilled that the Stow 10K – starting and finishing in The Square on Sunday, June 21st - has chosen 'Save Little Ed – the Stow Town Clock' as its fundraising community partner for the day. We will be looking for volunteer collection bucket shakers!



If you would like to help to 'Save Little Ed – the Stow Town Clock', you can use the QR code to the left to make a donation. Simply point your mobile phone camera at the QR code and you'll be taken to our Give A Little page. You can also make a cheque payable to PCC Stow on the Wold – please put your cheque in an envelope marked 'CLOCK' and pop it in the red safe beside the church door. You can also hand your cheque to Church Treasurer, Peter Dixon and let him know it's for the 'Save Little Ed' fund.

It costs £80,000 a year to keep the doors open at St Edward's and all this money comes from our congregation. We do not receive any funding from the central Church of England. We are a small congregation and keeping our church open isn't an easy task. The population of our town has fallen as homes become tourist accommodation. We also appreciate that money is tight for many people with the ever-rising cost of living. But because we are self-funding, work like restoring our lovely old clock is an extra cost, on top of our day-to-day church running costs. We appreciate any help you can give to 'Save Little Ed.'

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO 'SAVE LITTLE ED – THE STOW TOWN CLOCK.'

Services

Mondays at 9.00am	Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edward's Stow
Sunday 7 th June 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 14 th June 9.15am	BCP Matins, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 14 th June 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 14 th June 11.00am	BCP Matins (lay led) St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 21 st June 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 21 st June time tbc	St Edward's Stow – please be aware that there is a road race planned in Stow and there will be significant road closures. We will aim to have a short said Holy Communion and will confirm the time of this in due course
Saturday 27 th June 12.30pm	Wedding, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 28 th June 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 28 th June 10.30am	Morning Service, St Edward's Stow

Dates for your diary

Thursday 18th June 2-4pm - Open Day at Edwardstow Court: Join us for afternoon tea and take a tour of our beautiful home. We will also be hosting a complimentary 'Paying for Care' talk with Peter Moore DIP PFS Cert CII (MP) from the Society of Later Life Advisers (SOLLA) and a Financial Advisor at St James's Place – specialising in Wealth Management

Saturday 20th June – Condicote Jazz – Gate open at 5pm, performance starts at 6pm. An evening of live jazz featuring Tom Langham & Hot Fingers and The Cotswold School Band. Bring your own picnic or enjoy our BBQ. Tickets: £10 adult, children under 16 free for sale on the door or can be purchased in advance 01451 831248. More information here - [Condicote Village Jazz](#)

8th – 12th September – Music at Stow: Priority Booking will begin on June 8th 2026 for our Friends with General Booking opening on June 29th 2026. You can become a friend today by clicking [here](#).

Saturday 12th September – Ride and Stride - [Ride+Stride | Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust](#)

Regular Events

Wednesday Coffee Club - 9.00-10.30am in Huffkins

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

Mother's Union – First Thursday of the month at 2.30pm 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.

Baby and Toddler Group First Wednesday of the month 11.00am – 12.30pm at Edwardstow Court

Fish and Chip lunch First Friday of the month 12.15 – 2.00pm at Edwardstow Court