



## Benefice Newsletter

### February 2025



#### From Revd Karen

For the past eight years I have taken a retreat at the end of January in Wells in Somerset. It might seem to be an odd time of year to go away, but it is a good moment to reflect on the past year and look forward to the next. It also gives me space to just be with God in the sublime music of the cathedral choir and in the dance event that I attend. This year we danced a suite of dances called 'Into the Light' and, in the dark, wet and windy days of January it was very appropriate. These few days away have given me a great deal to reflect on in the coming months.

A retreat is just time out with God. A time to slow down. It can be as short as a day or as long as a month. It can be in silence, or not, in community or alone, in a retreat house or just in an Airbnb. It is whatever you need to refresh spiritually. I'm lucky in that I have found a pattern that works for me. All priests are supposed to take an annual retreat so this is something I should do, but I can recommend it. Many of us lead very busy lives. Just giving ourselves permission to slow down is positive. Even just pausing to be grateful for the sunshine, the snowdrops, a friend or family member or the cat is good for us.

Spring is just around the corner. We live in a very lovely part of the world so perhaps this month we can slow down and appreciate the beauty around us in the environment.

#### Blessing

May you have -  
Walls for the wind  
And a roof for the rain,  
And drinks beside the fire  
Laughter to cheer you  
And those you love near you,  
And all that your heart may desire

#### Benefice Contacts

Reverend Karen Wellman  
01451 831567  
revdkaren@stedwardsstow.org.uk

Church office:  
secretary@stedwardsstow.org.uk

Condicote:  
Chris Wynn 01451 830389  
Adam Fleming

The Swells:  
Jolyon Grey 01451 822215  
Hazel James 01451 831367

#### Website and Social Media for St Edward's

[https://  
www.achurchnearyou.com/  
church/14393/](https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14393/)

Facebook:  
[https://www.facebook.com/people/  
St-Edwards-Church-Stow-on-  
the-Wold/61566790355827/](https://www.facebook.com/people/St-Edwards-Church-Stow-on-the-Wold/61566790355827/)

#### Advance Notice

St Edward's Church will need to be closed during March for essential electrical work, we will confirm dates as soon as we have more details

## Focus on.....Closely Knit

In the past year Closely Knit have been hard at work. The sale of knitted items and books raises a significant sum. In 2024 Closely Knit have donated £3124.42 to the church as well as £150 to the Church rooms and £150 to Stow Youth Club.

Closely Knit usually meet in church from 10am to noon for crafting, chat and cake. Everyone is welcome to join in. In February we are meeting in the Church Room.

If you have any spare knitting wool or books that could be donated to the group they would be very welcome.



## The Stow Crucifixion



When last seen, our giant painting of the Crucifixion was lying face-down on the floor of the International Fine Art Conservation Studios in Bristol, as the conservators worked on relining the back of the canvas. The process is going well, and we expect to see the painting back in St Edward's church in March.

You will have noticed the almost full-size facsimile in St Edward's near the south door. However, we do not plan to return the painting to this location, where it is subject to variations of temperature and humidity, caused by opening and closing the door and use of the nearby catering unit. Instead, we hope to hang the renewed painting on the west wall of the north transept, the Lady Chapel. Although it will partially obscure a wall memorial, this is almost unreadable; we have been able – just - to decipher the text, which is now displayed on a notice below.

Given the size of the painting, conserving it was always going to be expensive. We were fortunate to obtain grants and donations of over £50,000, from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and others, to cover the cost before deciding to go ahead. However, the expected refund of the 20% VAT was subsequently refused by the Listed Places of Worship office, so we will have to fund the shortfall as best we can. Nevertheless, conserving the painting for the benefit of future generations is important, and is a part of our responsibility as stewards of this important church building.

## Services

Mondays at 9am	Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edwards
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 10.30am	Candlemas Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> February 11.00 am	Holy Communion, Newlands Court
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> February 9.15am	BCP Matins, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> February 10.30 am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow led by Bishop Robert
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> February 11am	Lay Led Matins, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 10.30 am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2.30pm	Dementia Friendly Service Edwardstow Court
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 10.30 am	Holy Communion St Edward's Stow

## Dates for your diary

### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February

Bishop Robert will lead and preach at the 10.30am service. Whilst he is here we are asking him to commission and bless the hard standing by the North Door. Everyone is welcome.

**At 4pm** the Seraphim Trio are holding a concert in church playing music from Hayden and Ravel. Tickets are available online [www.celebratingaustralianmusic.com](http://www.celebratingaustralianmusic.com) or on the door. See poster on page 4 for more details.

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 6.45pm for 7pm start** - Film Night in the Church Rooms – we will be showing 'The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry'

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March** - MU are holding a Lent Lunch in the Church Room at 12 noon

## Regular Events

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

**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.



**Sunday 9 February, 4pm - 5pm**  
**St. Edward's Church, Church St, Stow-on-the-Wold**

# The Seraphim Trio

*A one-hour recital in aid of St. Edward's Church and featuring one of Australia's most acclaimed chamber music groups.*

*This adventurous programme presents an Australian work alongside well known classics by Haydn and Ravel.*

*Wine and refreshments for sale after the concert.*

**Haydn** Piano Trio in C major  
**Wendy Hiscocks** Coral Fantasy  
**Maurice Ravel** Piano Trio

**Tickets: £15, under 16s free**

Scan QR code to buy tickets online. Also available on the door - cash only  
[www.celebratingaustralianmusic.com/events](http://www.celebratingaustralianmusic.com/events)



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