



## Benefice Newsletter October 2025



### From Revd Karen

The seasons have turned again and it is autumn. By the time this newsletter has been printed we will have celebrated our Harvest Festival in all the churches and both schools. There are pictures of the Harvest Festivals at Stow and Lower Swell churches as well as our fabulous Harvest Lunch at St Edward's. We are planning the next benefice lunch for after Christmas.

As the seasons change in the countryside around us we need to be mindful that the season is changing in the church locally and nationally. As a PCC we are very mindful that at St Edward's we are a major tourist attraction which is run by one full time priest, very part time administrative hours, no church wardens and a small group of dedicated volunteers. This is not sustainable long term. As a first step, we need more people to join the opening and closing team. If you, or anyone you know, would be able to volunteer to help keep the church open for visitors we would love to hear from you.

### YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

St Edwards's Church gets thousands of visitors each year. We are delighted that we are able to open the church every day to offer a place of welcome, pilgrimage and peace. If you love our church's place in the town please consider volunteering as part of a team that opens and closes the church throughout the year.

We are such a popular church that we also need ad hoc vergers for weddings and funerals to help set up and clear away the service and to make sure that there is an appropriate balance between the needs of visitors who want to take photos and space for these events to take place. You do not need to be part of the congregation, just someone who loves our church and town. We can offer remuneration for the verger role.

Please contact Revd Karen or Elizabeth if you would like to discuss.

### Blessing

We bless you,  
God of Seed and Harvest  
And we bless each other  
That the beauty of this world  
And the love that created it  
Might be expressed through our lives  
And be a blessing to others  
Now and always  
AMEN

John Birch



### Benefice Contacts

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Condicote:  
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Adam Fleming

The Swells:  
Jolyon Grey 01451 822215  
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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/](https://www.instagram.com/st_edwards_stow/)

### Online services links

5 Oct: <https://bit.ly/StEd051025>

12 Oct: <https://bit.ly/StEd12Oct25>

!9 Oct: <https://bit.ly/StEd191025>

26 Oct: NO STREAMING

### PCC at St Edwards

A huge thank you to Robert who has stepped down after many years and we may never know quite how much hard work. And welcome to Ingrid who has now joined us.

## Harvest Festival



We opened Lower Swell Church for Harvest this year and enjoyed singing hymns in the beautifully decorated church. The children of Condicote led the harvest festival earlier in the month and we enjoyed a fabulous BBQ afterwards on the pound. There are no pictures as I was so busy chatting and eating. Sorry!



St Edward's were blessed by a visit from a Dorset choir who were touring the area and very kindly agreed to delay their departure slightly and sing for us at the start of the service. The Harvest Lunch after the service was a huge success with around thirty of us sitting down to eat lunch at the back of church after a reflection on the harvest of the church in our service earlier that morning. Thank you to everyone who made it possible,

especially to Elizabeth who organised the food. I'm not sure what the staff in Tesco's made of us when we emptied the shelves of sherry but at least they know that we like to celebrate at St Edward's.



Our next benefice lunch/ celebration will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2026.



## Percy's Progress

*With thanks to Sue Lane*



Percy and Petunia flew into the church  
The vicar scattered seeds onto the floor  
Hoping to lure them both out through the door  
Only greedy Petunia took the bait  
Percy took his time and thought he'd wait  
She scoffed the seed and flew out of the church  
Leaving Percy way up high still sitting on his perch  
waiting for Petunia to return home  
He was left all alone,  
Alas, realising she was now gone, Percy felt sad,  
The vicar felt bad



So took poor lonely Percy under her wing  
He started helping her do her thing  
Now Percy and the vicar go off on their travels together  
Hawkesbury, dancing, knitting, coffee mornings and Music at Stow  
And what do you know?  
He's found friends and fame  
He's Percy the Pigeon and glad he came  
Into the church that day  
Like all pilgrims he found his way



## Music at Stow



What an incredible range of  
concerts this year!  
Thank you to Music at Stow for  
their wonderful organisation and  
tidying up afterwards! This year  
we are especially grateful that  
they made space for a lovely  
wedding on the same day as the  
Led Zeppelin tribute band.



**RIDE + STRIDES**  
for Churches



Well done Peter for completing the walk  
around 10 churches on the Monday before  
Music at Stow!

It very often clashes with Music at Stow so we  
can't open the church to Ride and Striders on  
the day but perhaps next year some more of  
us could do some walking and fundraising...



## Services

Mondays 9.00 am	Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edward's Stow
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> October 3.00pm	Prayers and hymns at Beechwood Park
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 11.00am	Holy Communion, Newlands Court
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2pm	Stow School Harvest Festival, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> October 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow with bells before the service
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 9.15am	BCP Matins Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 11.00am	BCP Matins (lay led) St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 10.30 am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 10.30am	Morning Service
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2.30pm	Dementia Friendly Service, Edwardstow Court

## Dates for your diary

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November 10am** – MU Stow Branch coffee morning

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 3pm** - Piano recital by Jill Crossland with tea and cake available

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> November** – Lumos

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November 3pm** – Advent Carol Service at St Edward's Stow

## Regular Events

**Wednesday Coffee Club** -9.00-10.30am in Huffkins

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

**Mother's Union** – Thursday 2nd October at 2pm in 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.