



Benefice Diary October 2024

From Reverend Karen:

It has been a year and a month since I was licensed to the Benefice of Stow, Condicote and the Swells and it has been a very eventful year. The adjustment to life outside of a big town or city took some time; however the Rectory cats are delighted with life outside of London. Two of them are making it their mission to clear every mouse from our side of Sheep Street. The other two cheer them on from the comfort of the window seats in the Rectory.

There has been a lot going on over the summer. The heating repairs at St Edward's Church are now complete. It was really cold during Music at Stow week so we were able to test out the heating and it works. The church heats up much quicker than it used to and the new electric heating in the chancel is also working well. I am looking forward to a warmer winter at the high altar than I had last year!

One of the joys and challenges of living in this beautiful part of the world is that there are a lot of tourists. I have been working in St Edward's on Fridays when I can and I have spoken to people from all over the world and the UK. Many of them leave prayers on our Prayer Tree. You can see how many prayers on the last page.

One of the biggest challenges for us at St Edward's has been the damage to the graveyard by the North Door. The work to create a hard standing by the north door and replace the paths near the door was completed in early September. We will be putting up some information boards to remind visitors to donate to the church, to point them in the direction of the various shops

that sell Stow or Tolkien themed merchandise and to share with them some of the history of the church and the trees.

We have had a wedding and a marriage blessing at St Edward's this year. We have one more wedding when Angus and Katie get married on the 5th October and at the time of writing, the church is looking wonderful with lots of greenery decorating the pillars in church. Next year we have seven weddings and blessings booked for St Edward's and one wedding booked at St Nicholas, Condicote. It is likely that we will have more ceremonies in 2025 and 2026 as the word gets out that the vicar loves a wedding celebration in the North Cotswolds.

We seem to have had something of a musical few months. Music at Stow was a fabulous event with the church full of people dancing to the music of Motown as well as enjoying the sound of jazz guitars, brass, clarinet and piano. The piano concert with Jill Crossland in July and another with three young and very talented musicians in September were well attended and proved that the church is a very special concert venue. We hope to run more concerts in the next year.

It is a great sadness that we are unable to run the Christmas Tree Festival this year. What we are able to do though is to ask the local community to join with us in creating a Crib Festival. There will be posters going up soon. If you are able to make a nativity scene or to bring your own nativity or crib set into church to display it between the 6th-8th December we can create something that honours the history of the Christmas Tree Festival and takes it into a new form.

CHANGES TO SERVICE TIMES:

Finally, there is one major change which is happening across all the churches. We will be changing the time of the services at St Nicholas and St Mary's to 9.15am. Thank you to the PCCs of both churches for being so gracious in moving the services to an earlier time. This means that St Edward's will be able to hold its service at 10.30am from the 27th October. Remembrance Sunday on the 10th November will continue at its 11am slot. A start time of 10.30am allows us to have more time for coffee (and perhaps cake!) after the service and to not run into lunch. In the year I have been here I have discovered that the core feature of all the churches is hospitality. This is a gift which is very much to be celebrated.



The Prayer Tree at St Edward's

Every week there are between 40-60 prayers left in the bowl by the tree. There are prayers of hope and love. There are prayers for healing and prayers for family and loved ones to come to faith. Other prayers are known only to God in the ribbons tied to the tree. There is also a gift of a camel from a child who left it very intentionally by the tree.

BENEFICE CONTACTS

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

CHURCHWARDENS:

Stow-on-the-Wold

Vacant

Condicote

Chris Wynn 830389 and Adam Fleming

The Swells

Jolyon Grey 822215 and Hazel James 831367

REGULAR EVENTS

CLOSELY KNIT 10am —noon every Saturday in St Edward's 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.

OCTOBER SERVICES

MONDAYS 9.00am Morning Prayer St Edward's Stow

THURSDAY 3rd October

11.00 am Holy Communion Newlands Court

SATURDAY 5TH October

3.00pm Wedding Angus and Katie St Edward's Stow

SUNDAY 6th October

11.00 am Holy Communion St Edward's Stow
for St Edward's Day

SUNDAY 13th October

9.30 am BCP Matins St Nicholas Condicote

11.00 am Holy Communion St Edward's Stow

Led by Revd Ali Mepham

11.00 am Matins (lay-led) St Mary's Upper Swell

SUNDAY 20th October

9.30 am BCP Holy Communion St Mary's Upper Swell

11.00 am Informal service St Edward's Stow

Harvest Festival

2.30 pm Dementia Friendly Service Edwardstow Court

SUNDAY 27th October

9.15 am BCP Holy Communion St Nicholas Condicote

10.30 am Holy Communion St Edward's Stow

All Sunday services from St Edward's Church Stow-on-the-Wold are streamed unless the technology decides not to behave! There is no streaming on the 6th October.