

Dear Friends

According to the Venerable Bede, writing in the 8th century, the Anglo-Saxon name for September was Heiligmonath, the month of holy festivities. Unfortunately he doesn't specify what these festivities were: undoubtedly Michaelmas at the end of the month would have been one of them, and we can probably assume that the rest were related in some way to the completion of the harvest. This does not feel very different from the modern perception of the month. However, the Anglo-Saxon take on what we call October was very different. Bede tells us they called it "Winterfylle" – the month of the winter full moon. There was no conception of the transitional season of autumn as such: for them, winter began with the first full moon after the September equinox.

Though alien to our way of thinking, this is really no more arbitrary than any other way of dividing up the gradual slow development of the year into separate, distinct segments. We know that we can sometimes get balmy weather in mid-October – St Luke's little summer; even in November we may get St Martin's little summer, and it may stay mild later still. Conversely, the weather can get pretty horrible even in September. Meteorologists say winter begins on 1st December; astronomers say it starts at the winter solstice.

This year, we have had a succession of punishing heat waves, starting with temperatures in June more typical of August. Sometimes this made the thought of cold weather seem very attractive – until we remember the misery caused by winters such as 2010-11 and (for those of us of a certain age) 1963. It seems as if our weather is truly becoming more unpredictable, and it is not realistic to talk about when the seasons actually begin, nor what they will bring. "No-one knows that day or hour, not even the angels in Heaven . . . "

However, whatever the calendar says, we recognise winter when it arrives, whenever that may be. On the spiritual and emotional plane, we cannot expect to live always in balmy sunshine. We are likely sometimes to encounter dark and difficult times without the benefit of advance warning: the calendar can give us no hint of what to expect. At this time of the year, we know that winter is coming even though we don't know exactly when. We know we have some drear and gloomy times to get through but as Shelley put it, "if Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" We have faith that relief will eventually arrive in God's good time.

LG

Future dates for your diary.

Harvest Festival service at Stowe Church

Sunday 11th October 9.45am

Harvest Supper at Dadford Village Hall

Monday 12th October, time to be confirmed, followed by an auction of the produce

All are welcome - Tickets can be obtained by contacting Nancy Pullin on 07801105986 or Kay Murray



Healing Service 19th July 2026 at 5pm at Stowe Church



This service, open to all, was well attended and led by Rev Cathy Pearce. Rev Chris Murray gave a very interesting talk about Biblical healing and his experience of the healing ministry.

Towards the end of the service there was an opportunity for individuals to receive prayer with Chris and his wife, Cheryl - either for themselves or on behalf of their loved ones. It was a prayerful and gentle service and enjoyed by those who attended who found it helpful.

THE REVD. CHRISTOPHER TURNER

A few weeks ago, the spacious church of St Peter's, Hook Norton, was packed for Christopher Turner's funeral. It was a most moving service, splendidly taken by Dr Roly Riem, former Canon of Winchester Cathedral, who had been briefly married to Christopher's eldest daughter, Rosalie, back in 1989.

One of the most poignant memorials inside Stowe Church must be the little window celebrating Rosalie's life, tragically cut short by a car accident on one of the very last evenings of her father's Stowe headmastership. The fortitude with which Christopher and his wife Lucia faced up to that sudden, awful event will surely ever be remembered. Somehow Lucia stood up before a hushed Chapel to explain to everyone how much their faith was helping them to cope. To those who wrote letters of condolence, Christopher responded with copies of that moving testimony 'Footprints in the Sand' which ends with the Lord's reassurance: 'My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. In your times of trial and suffering, when you only see one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.'

A Wykhamist and former Oxford rowing blue, Christopher was nearly fifty when he took over Stowe in the autumn of 1979. As a former Head of Classics at Radley and Charterhouse, he had probably come with a brief to raise academic standards and he certainly did so, though the deep recession of the early Eighties made for challenging times. Cultivating modesty rather than self-promotion, he cut an 'upright, donnish and formal' figure which could superficially disguise the warmth of his personality. It is said that, early on, he failed to impress the ladies who had just started *The Good Schools' Guide* and suffered accordingly, whereas his successor, a more worldly individual, plied them generously with gin and tonic and Stowe's standing in the world of private education rose impressively.

Christopher's faith went back a long way. He had considered ordination as a young man. (Interestingly, Christopher's first cousin was the Revd. David Sheppard, the great England cricketer and Bishop of Liverpool.) He enthusiastically supported Stowe's long commitment to providing a teacher who'd also act as parish priest. After the avuncular Jos Nichol retired, Christopher provided the charming Michael Drury. He himself worshipped in Stowe Church whenever he could. I still particularly associate Good Friday services with him. He would always be there, sitting unobtrusively in one of the middle pews on the right-hand side.

Christopher encouraged imaginative ideas. He much supported the annual staff musicals, a real feature of his time. Lucia, though perhaps not a stage natural, gallantly sang her way through *The Gondoliers* and *Oklahoma*. The *Daily Telegraph*'s very positive obituary mentions that, with his flowing gown and bushy eyebrows, Christopher became known affectionately as 'the Bat'. There were certainly small black plastic models of bats all around the school! One even appeared for a few hours on the North Front pediment!

His retirement years were used most productively: ordination; volunteer teaching in a deprived area of Birmingham; and then the long period working for three Cotswold parishes near his home. His sermons on occasional Stowe Church visits were always memorable.

Christopher's whole life was underpinned by the active faith that made him so caring. It was typified in end-of-term reports that showed deep knowledge of each pupil, expressed in sympathetic and challenging ways. How blest were all who knew him. **TM**



Christopher enjoying refreshments with past members of the Stowe Fellowship, some of whom worked with him during his time at Stowe School.



11th July - Imogen Wallersteiner and Thomas Trower

15th August - Isobel Close-Smith and Harry Ewert (see photographs below)

Our thoughts and prayers are with these newlyweds as they embark on married life.



Isobel has been part of the Stowe fellowship all her life, as were her parents, grandparents and great grandparents.



DADFORD WI

Due to unforeseen circumstances I am not able to give full details of the most recent meetings but see below for September and October.

Thursday 10th September - speaker Roger Edwards on 'The Ten Dukes of Buckingham'.

Thursday 8th October - Speaker Jonathan Humbert on 'Bell Ringing in St. Albans'

All are welcome to join us at 2.30pm in Dadford Village Hall to listen to these interesting guests.

Best wishes, Hilary

Our thoughts and prayers are with Loreen and Pete at this difficult time and hope that she will be well enough to join us soon.



The most famous "1st Duke of Buckingham" George Villiers, (1592–1628)

DADFORD BIBLE STUDY

Everyone is welcome to this informal and friendly group as we get together to look at the Bible and what it means for us today.

We will be meeting for approximately one hour, roughly once a month, at Dadford Village Hall at 10.00am on a Friday. Dates to be confirmed.

Any questions please ring: Rev Cathy Pearce 01280 821976

I'm available in the Parish Wednesdays and Thursdays, and at Sunday services .

Thank you
Cathy

Jesus said "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" John 10:10



What's been happening at St. James and St. John Church of England Primary Schools in Akeley and Chackmore

St. James and St. John School is a one-form entry school located in two villages. Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 children are taught at the infant site in Akeley and Year 3 up to Year 6 are taught at the junior site in Chackmore.

As the summer evenings lengthen and the trees start to lose their greenness, it is a sign that the summer is ending and the new academic year will be shortly starting.

We offer a big 'Hello' and 'Welcome back' to all our pupils, staff and their families! We hope everyone has enjoyed the summer holidays. For those who have been working, we hope you have been able to enjoy some time relaxing with your family and friends.

We also extend an especially big welcome to all the new children and their families who have joined the school, including our new Foundation Stage intake. We are positive that they will all settle in very quickly!

The staff have been busy planning an exciting curriculum for the upcoming academic year and curriculum overviews should be available to parents on the school website shortly. 'Meet and greet' sessions will take place close to the start of September so that children can share their new learning spaces with their parents, and parents will have the opportunity to meet the teachers and other staff who will be supporting their children.

Forest school sessions will start again soon for the children at the Akeley site and towards half term the children in Years 4 and 5 will start their weekly swimming lessons too. We also look forward to Bikeability sessions for the older children, who will learn valuable cycling and road safety skills. We hope they all enjoy these opportunities.

Towards the end of September we are looking forward to celebrating the anniversary of the joining together of the Akeley and Chackmore Infant schools into St James and St John Primary School 20 years ago. We are busy planning, with support from the PTFA, a day of activities on Friday 25th September all day at our Akeley site. We then extend an invitation to all in our local communities to come and celebrate with us between 3-5pm. We hope to see some familiar faces there!

We are all looking forward to another exciting school year, bursting with fun and interesting learning opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom!

Date 2026	Warden/Sidespeople	Prayers	Refreshments
6th Sept	Nancy Pullin/Chris Close-Smith	Liturgy	Lyn East
13th Sept	Andrew Rudolf/Patricia Forbes		Gill Smith
20th Sept	Tamara and John Kimpton	Andrew Rudolf	Nancy Pullin
27th Sept	Gill Smith/Kay Murray	Kay Murray	Nancy Shepherd
4th Oct	Richard and Essex Close-Smith	Liturgy	Tamara Kimpton
11th Oct	Nancy Pullin/Chris Close-Smith		Elsbeth Mullineux
18th Oct	Tamara and John Kimpton	Tamara Kimpton	Kay Murray
25th Oct	Gill Smith/Patricia Forbes	Gill Smith	Lyn East

Date 2026	Flowers	Cleaning	Prayer-board
6th Sept	Kay Murray		Tamara Kimpton
13th Sept	Hilary Hawkins		John Kimpton
20th Sept	Lyn East	Alice, Josh and Family	Gill Smith
27th Sept	Loreen Williams		Kay Murray
4th Oct			Lyn East
11th Oct	Richard Close-Smith	Nancy Pullin & Hazlewoods	Tamara Kimpton
18th Oct			John Kimpton
25th Oct	Hilary Hawkins		Gill Smith

*I will be preparing the rotas during December for **flower arranging and church cleaning** for 2027. Please let me know if you would like to be included. Many thanks, Lyn East*

Date 2026	Time	Service	Lead/Preach	Chalice
6th Sept	9.45	1662 Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Andrew Rudolf
13th Sept	9.45	Family Service	Dave Pearce	
20th Sept	9.45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	John Kimpton
27th Sept	9.45	Morning Prayer	Rev Cathy Pearce	
4th Oct	9.45	1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	Lyn East
11th Oct	9.45	Harvest Family Service	Rev Cathy and Dave Pearce	
18th Oct	9.45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Andrew Rudolf
25th Oct	9.45	Morning Prayer	Rev Cathy Pearce	

The North Buckingham Parish is part of the Diocese of Oxford in the Buckingham Archdeaconry.
www.nbpchurches.org.uk for viewing the different villages and places of interest and details of services.
Rector: Rev. Hans Taling, The Rectory, Maids Moreton, MK18 1QD
Email: rector@nbpchurches.org.uk

Office Contact/Administrator: Val Rickwood, St. Edmund's Church Office **Telephone:** 01280 814430
Parish Office Email: office@nbpchurches.org.uk
Licensed Reader: Margaret Culley.
Youth Work Co-ordinator: Rev Cathy Pearce