

Dadford with Stowe Parish Newsletter

January - February 2025

New Year's resolutions. It is one of those activities that keeps many people occupied, but unfortunately only for a short while. Resolutions are quickly broken and subsequently forgotten and perhaps given a new try the next year.

New Year's resolutions are not something new. It is said that already the ancient Babylonians made New Year's resolutions, which is about 4000 years ago. Also the Romans, 2000 years ago, had their *New Year's resolutions*. *New Year's resolutions* were also known in the Middle Ages. When knights would make an annual "Peacock Vow" at the end of the year. It was to renew their resolution to maintain the values of knighthood by putting their hands on a live or roasted peacock.

Later, in the 1700's, during the Mass on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, the people looked to the past and made a resolution to do better in the year ahead.

In this day and age, resolutions are made by people all over the world.

But, going back to the origin of the *New Year's resolutions* by the Babylonians, they had a deeper meaning. The Babylonians would make resolutions to their gods and made promises to pay their debts and returned borrowed items to their rightful owners. They took those resolutions for reasons of fear, because they believed that if they broke their promises, their gods would punish them for breaking their resolutions. But, if they kept their resolutions, they believed that their gods would treat them favourably that year.

For the Romans it was not much different and they also made resolutions for good behaviour.

In our day and age there is not much room left for religion in our resolutions, but perhaps we might bring some of it back into our *New Year's resolutions*. Whereas the ancient religions based their resolutions on fear for their gods, we base our resolutions on God who doesn't want our fear, but only our love and loyalty to Him.

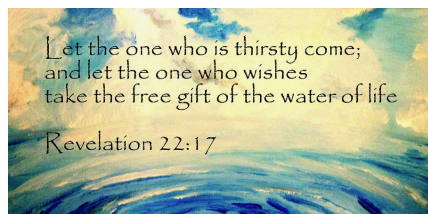
For the New Year I wish you all a deepening understanding of God's love for us, in and through Christ our Lord.



Rev Hans Taling

Family Nativity Service led by Kay Murray.

The beautifully decorated Christmas tree was in place, and made a lovely backdrop for the Nativity service and enhanced by the children dressed as shepherds or angels. The Christmas story was told through short Bible readings, with the children (and young people) bringing up the appropriate Christmas figures to put into the crib at the front of the Church. It was a very meaningful and lovely service. A selection of refreshments and mince pies mince pies was served after the service and the children were given a Christmas book. As people made their way home chocolates were offered; a gift from Rev Cathy Pearce.



Let the one who is thirsty come;
and let the one who wishes
take the free gift of the water of life

Revelation 22:17

Family Services

January 12th
The water of Life
Isaiah 12, 1-6
Celebrate God's
goodness

February 9th - The water of life
Ezekiel 36, 24-30
God's Holiness

This song of praise and thankfulness completes our joy and happiness at the birth of our Saviour. We marvel at the message of Christmas, that God's Son was born as a baby. His name means "God is with us".

It is exciting to think that God took on human form and lived with ordinary people. Jesus healed and comforted. He urged people to give up their sinful ways and trust God. As water brings refreshment to the thirsty so God's people rejoice when He welcomes them into His kingdom. Jesus lives with us today and offers us the water of life. Jesus invites us to taste and see.

For the Israelites the consequences of sin were drastic - they were conquered and taken into exile in 597 BC. God punished His people because they were bringing His Name into disrepute, a laughing stock among the nations. In Babylon they had years to remember, regret and repent. While God's discipline was severe He still loved His people and promised to cleanse them from their sin and restore them to their land.

We know our world needs cleansing from worshipping such contemporary idols of the pursuit of wealth, happiness, power and self-obsession. We need spiritual renewal to do what is right and pleasing to God. We are called to be light and blessing to all people. The people of God are the media. How well do we exercise that responsibility?

‘Confusing dates’ - Stowe Parish Church

The little brass memorial to John Temple in the chancel often puzzles or amuses visitors who stop to read it. “Here lyeth buried the bodie of John Temple the second sonne of Thomas Temple Esquier and of Hester his wife. The day of his berth was xxxi daye of October anno Dⁿⁱ 1592 & he died the first day of Januarii in the same yeare A^o Dni 1592.” This appears to suggest that he died some 10 months before he was born. This is not a mistake, as visitors often suppose. Until 1752, the first day of the year – New Year’s day – was held to be Lady Day, 25th March. By this reckoning, 24th March 1592 was immediately followed by 25th March 1593. So John Temple was born in October 1592 and died aged two months in what we would now call January 1593. Historians have to take care with documents giving dates in the first quarter of years before 1752. Sometimes the “old style” date is given, and sometimes the modernised version. According to her monument, John’s sister Martha Penyston died in January 1619. Some articles concerning the family say she died in 1619; others “correct” the date and say she died in 1620.

John Temple’s father, Thomas, describes himself as “Esquier” on the brass, but by the time Martha died he is Sir Thomas, Knight and Baronet (having availed himself in 1611 of King James’s offer of honours for cash). Martha of course has a grand monument in the chapel which bears her husband’s surname - Penystone. The fact that baby John is interred in the chancel and not the chapel is a good indication that the chapel did not yet exist in what we would call 1593. Sir Thomas’s father John acquired the manorial rights of Stowe sometime around 1590, and they passed to Thomas on his death in 1603. It seems likely that Thomas had the chapel built subsequently to emphasise his newly-acquired social status.

March 25th was not just the start of the calendar year, but also the fiscal year. When the start of the calendar year was brought forward to 1st January, the fiscal year continued to run so that taxes, interest etc could be calculated for a whole 365 days from Lady Day 1751. Thus in 1752 the tax year ended as before on 24th March. However, later in this year the Gregorian calendar was introduced. The old (Julian) calendar had gradually got out of synchrony with the seasons of the year, and the new calendar needed to “jump” forward 11 days to correct the discrepancy. Eleven days were therefore omitted from September 1752. This meant that by 24th March 1753 the fiscal year still had 11 days to run. The tax year in 1752-53 therefore finished on 4th April, and our tax year has started on 5th April ever since. For a while, 5th April was known as “old Lady Day” by those unwilling to accept the change.

Lady Day is also linked to Christmas. Ancient philosophers held that a feature of a perfect life was that it ended on the anniversary of when it had begun. In other words, people of the highest virtue died on their birthday – so our Lord’s crucifixion must have taken place on the anniversary of his birth. Early Christian theologians decided that the first Good Friday must have been March 25th. However, they said, His true birth was not his physical birth to Mary, but the Annunciation. So if the immaculate conception occurred on 25th March, His physical birth must have happened 9 months later – hence December 25th. This conveniently allowed the church to re-purpose the pagan winter solstice celebration as Christmas.

What a lot of history reflected in an apparent mistake on one small brass plate!

LG

A CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

on the Nativity accounts of Matthew and Luke

Tune: Auld Lang Syne

To Luke and Matthew we again
This Christmas will repair,
To read of the Nativity
Of the Lord, our Saviour dear.
Two comple-mentary accounts
Spell out the Virgin Birth,
And tell us how, through God’s design,
Jesus Christ arrived on earth.



While Matthew has much more to tell,
Like Joseph’s God-sent news;
And Herod’s evil plans, all hatched
As he fears a ‘King of Jews’;
The Magi, too, who come to give
Their presents of great worth.
And last, the ancient prophecies
Fully met by Jesus’ birth.

In Luke we read of Mary’s joy
When told what God intends:
Her babe, His son, a king will be
And his reign won’t have an end.
Then later Luke, in Bethlehem,
Sees shepherds meet with fame;
They hear the news of Jesus’ birth,
And the Sav-iour they proclaim.

This Christmas time we won’t forget
The Gospels of the two,
Who handed down such precious facts,
Ones from which a great Faith grew.
We thank you, Father God, that still
This Christmas they’ll suffice,
To spread again the blessed news
Of the Birth of Jesus Christ.

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STOWE PARISH COUNCIL

If you wish to contact the parish council please email info@stowepec.uk or contact one of the seven councillors in the village, whose details can be found under the [Councillors](#) page.



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Dadford WI

After a very successful 2024 the year finished with a superb Christmas Meeting at our President's home. We are now looking forward to our 2025 programme.

Why not come along and join in the WI fun, we would love to see you.

All members join in wishing you a Very Happy and Healthy New Year. The next meeting is on the **9th January**, speaker to be confirmed, and on **13th February** Philippa Atkinson will be taking us on a trip along The Pilgrimage Route to Santiago de Compostela.

See you soon,
Loreen

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What's been happening at St. James and St. John Church of England Primary School

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.

At the start of November, year 6 enjoyed an exciting four night residential to Manor Adventure, where they were able to try a whole host of exciting activities, including high ropes, archery, abseiling, an underground maze, hiking and more. Independence, resilience, courage and determination were developed, with unforgettable memories being created.

The children at the Chackmore site remembered those who had fought for us, during our annual Remembrance service. Two children from the Akeley site were also chosen to lay the wreath at the Akeley memorial, on behalf of the village of Akeley.

The Year 1 and 2 children enjoyed a multi-sports festival in mid November, and were excellent ambassadors for the school, with their fabulous manners and great sportsmanship! The Year 1 children also enjoyed a trip to the Milton Keynes museum in connection with their history topic on toys.

Year 3 enjoyed a 'Stone Age Day' at school where they visited a stone age 'village', searched for useful stone age items, tried their hand at hunting using sticks, stones and arrows, made and cooked on an open fire. Most children also tried a mealworm!

During Anti-bullying Week both sites took part in Odd Socks Day, wearing mismatched socks to school to highlight the importance of embracing and celebrating everyone's unique and special qualities. For World Kindness Day we celebrated one of our core values of kindness, with a 'comfy' day where children and staff could come to school in comfy clothes.

The Chackmore site hosted a Christingle Service to mark the start of Advent, giving everyone a chance to reflect upon the meaning and importance of Christmas. Year 4 also took part in the Buckingham churches 'Christmas Unwrapped' event. Other Christmas events included the nativity play at Akeley, a carol concert at Chackmore, a winter fair, the whole school panto trip (oh yes we do!) and lots more besides!

We now have a new facebook page- St James and St John C of E Primary School (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61566029610803>). Follow us to stay updated on events, creative projects, and all the little moments that make our school community special.

Finally, November saw the opening of the application portal for new pupils in the September 2025 intake. Individual tours with the headteacher are available by calling the Akeley office on 01280 860272 or by emailing office@stjamesjohn.bucks.sch.uk.

St James and St John CE Primary School would like to wish all our families and friends of the school a very Merry Christmas and New Year, with all the best wishes for 2025!

Date 2025	Warden/Sidespeople	Prayers	Refreshments
Jan 5th	Tamara and John Kimpton	Liturgy	Lyn East
Jan 12th	Nancy Pullin & Patricia Forbes		Tamara Kimpton
Jan 19th	Andrew Rudolf/Loreen Williams & Hilary Hawkins	Gillian Macdonald	Elsbeth Mullineux
Jan 26th	Gill Smith/Lyn & Ray East	Gill Smith	Kay Murray
Feb 2nd	Laurence Gibson/Chris Close-Smith	Liturgy	Nancy Pullin
Feb 9th	Tamara and John Kimpton		Gill Smith
Feb 16th	Andrew Rudolf/Lyn and Ray East	Andrew Rudolf	Germaine Radcliffe
Feb 23rd	Richard and Essex Close-Smith	Kay Murray	Gillian Macdonald

Date 2025	Flowers	Cleaning	Prayer-board
Jan 5th			Gillian Macdonald
Jan 12th	Gillian Macdonald	Chris Close-Smith & Venice	Gill Smith
Jan 19th			Kay Murray
Jan 26th	Heather Meredith		Lyn East
Feb 2nd		John and Tamara Kimpton	Tamara Kimpton
Feb 9th	Kay Murray		John Kimpton
Feb 16th			Gillian Macdonald
Feb 23rd	Hilary Hawkins	Lyn and Ray East	Gill Smith

Date 2025	Time	Service	Lead/Preach	Chalice
Jan 5th	09:45	1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	Lyn East
Jan 12th	09:45	Family Service	Kay Murray	
Jan 19th	09:45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Andrew Rudolf
Jan 26th	09:45	Morning Prayer	Rev Cathy Pearce	
Feb 2nd	09:45	1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	John Kimpton
Feb 9th	09:45	Family Service	Kay Murray	
Feb 16th	09:45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Lyn East
Feb 23rd	09:45	Morning Prayer	L - Gillian Macdonald P - Andrew Rudolf	