

# Dadford with Stowe Parish Newsletter

## March - April 2026

Reliable witnesses!

Eastertide is upon us again, beginning with Ash Wednesday on 18 February 2026, followed by the Lent period which for some introduces a time of fasting, or abstinence from certain foods.

It could be a time for looking into oneself, but that is not the message of Easter. The Easter message began with Mary finding an empty sepulchre and asking her friends trying to find an explanation of what happened. Her witness together with the witnesses of the others who followed her was the first message of what happened at Easter to the world. Their first reliable witness brought many others to look for themselves and believe that indeed Jesus had risen from the dead and to bear witness to Jesus as the living Lord Jesus Christ.

It's not different today, being a reliable witness to Christ will help others look closer for Him as well. Reliable witnesses of Christ are just as important in this day and age for our society.

**Rev Hans Taling**

### Gillian Macdonald

On Tuesday 27 January, an absolutely packed Stowe Church said much about the fruitful life of Gillian Macdonald, which we were saluting in such deep affection and sadness. We were given a brilliantly detailed eulogy from Alastair, her younger son, allowing many new insights into Gillian's long and multi-faceted life. We all surely learnt so much more about her than we had ever known before, for the quietly modest Gillian never wavered from preferring to hear about other people's lives than talking about her own.

The overriding message that came out, like a clarion call, from that memorable Tuesday service was the Number One importance in her life of her Christian faith, an importance that was so poignantly illustrated in her last year or so of particular physical handicap, when, with quiet resolution, she still gave so much to Stowe Church in so many varied ways. We salute her memory, then, not only in deep affection and sadness, but also in deep gratitude.

She was many different things to many different people. But she was surely, in her own quiet way, a wonderful inspiration to us all, as we continue forwards on our own imperfect journeys in a far from perfect world.



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### LIKE GILLIAN

May we live out lives of service,  
Just like Gillian, full of verve,  
Prompted by our Saviour's mission:  
Son of God, yet born to serve.

May our love be strong like Gillian's  
Showing always how what it's worth  
In bold lives of illustration  
How love nurtures peace on earth.

May we find rare strength, like Gillian.  
Always asking God to lead,  
As we face a world in tumult,  
With deep prayer a daily need.

May we spread Good News like Gillian,  
Making known the King of Kings  
By a daily, quiet witness  
Of the joy His Gospel brings.

Close to Jesus, just like Gillian,  
May we face this life's release,  
Poised for sacred, sweet reunion,  
Poised for realms of perfect peace.

**TM**

## **On Mortality: an evening of poetry and song by Dr Andrew C Webber**

**Stowe Church Wednesday 18th March and Thursday 19th March 7.45pm. Admission free.**

It seems to me, when you think about it, that all art can probably be categorised in four ways. It's either about love, nature, God or the finite nature of life (often all four at the same time).

As a teacher of Film, Media and English at Stowe school, over the last six or seven years I have put on poetry evenings with various themes. I ask carefully selected staff to record poems I have selected in our recording studio and then these are played alongside musical interludes in one of our lovely venues: the Roxy theatre, the Ugland or the beautiful Music Room. Having already tackled TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Gothic writing, the seasons and Love (and limerence), this year I turned my attention towards the theme of mortality.

Therefore, I have put together a programme of some of the finest poems in the English language which deal with that subject and have chosen seven or eight of the new songs (mainly folky style musings) I have written over the last few years, which I will be **performing live at Stowe church on Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th March at 7.45pm**. The performance will last about an hour and admission is free. I hope to be joined by some special guests and am grateful to many of my fellow teacher colleagues who suggested works for inclusion. I hope our readings do them justice.

The evening promises to be a melancholy but life-affirming one and is open to parents, pupils, staff, members of Stowe congregation plus families and friends. It is the first time, for many years, that the school and the church have collaborated and I am indebted to Rev Cathy Pearce for kindly giving permission to use the venue.

I hope that you will be able to support the show and I will be performing a few songs in both a school assembly and a Sunday morning service (1 March) to promote the event.

On Mortality: a show a lifetime in the making.

**Dr Andrew C Webber**



### **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER** A service for everyone!

## **Friday 6 March**

*I will give you rest, come*

**Nigeria 2026**

#### **World Day of Prayer 2026**

Our sisters in Nigeria have prepared this year's service on the theme of:

**'I will give you rest'**

Please join us for our ecumenical service at:

**Buckingham Parish Church**  
on **Friday 6 March 2026 at 11am**

All are welcome



**INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION**  
24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led  
[wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk) Registered Charity Number 233242

### **THE DISCIPLES' SONG AT CANA**



to the tune: '**All Things Bright and Beautiful**'

*Water, turned to precious wine,  
Which all the guests extolled!  
Wondrous powers revealed to us!  
What glories will unfold?  
His mother Mary urged him  
To ease our host's dismay.  
She must have been quite certain  
Her son could save the day.*

*Water, turned to precious wine,  
Which all the guests extolled!  
Wondrous powers revealed to us  
That make the weak feel bold!  
His mother Mary, somehow,  
Had known this was the hour  
To show the supernatural  
Was quite within his power.*

*Water, turned to precious wine,  
Which all the guests extolled!  
Like that dove, another sign!  
What truths the Baptist told!  
Six jars of twenty gallons  
Or maybe even more,  
Brimful they were with water!  
Yet what was it they'd pour?*

*Water, turned to precious wine,  
Which all the guests extolled!  
His powers aren't like yours or mine.*

*What heights his future holds!  
How great our sense of wonder  
That gobbles up all doubt!  
He's surely the Messiah  
The prophets wrote about!*

*Wonder fills our hearts today,  
Great wonder that will last.  
By his side we'll ever stay!  
Our old lives in the past!*



*A small offering, relating to  
last Sunday's (1st February)  
service, to cheer a gloomy  
February morning! TM*



Members started the year remembering with fondness our fellow member Gillian Macdonald who died recently. Gillian was a devoted and loyal member of our WI, secretary for several years and a friend to all. She will be very sadly missed.

oOo

In January we started our Celebratory year in style with a talk by Philippa Atkinson on the Pilgrimage Route to Santiago De Compostela. This was followed in February by a full account of Richard Close-Smith's trip across the Atlantic on his thirty nine foot yacht 'Diamond Blue'. Sailing from the Canaries to St Lucia and taking just under three weeks. Thank you so much for such interesting talks.

Why not join us on the 12<sup>th</sup> March for a talk by Peter Cave on 'The Royal Exchange and its Environs' and on the 9<sup>th</sup> April we are set to enjoy music with Linda Watkins.

Look forward to seeing you all soon.  
Loreen

### **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 meet for approximately one hour at Dadford Village Hall at 10.00am Friday.....**

**20 March, 17 April, 8 May, 12 June, 10 July.**

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**

We have been busy across both sites this cold and wet January and February, with various activities designed to energise and keep us moving through this time of year.

As we moved through January, with the memories of the holiday period fading, it could have felt like a long month. At school, we made the most from the potential of the new year, with opportunities to reflect upon what we would like to achieve this year, to try new things and widen our learning opportunities.

To start us off with an enthusiastic return, the Key Stage 2 students at our Chackmore site (years 3-6) enjoyed exploring our new orienteering trail, which was installed in those first few days back. With many warm layers on, we learnt how to read the trail map, how to decipher the signs and enjoyed racing each other to find and follow certain clues. We also enjoyed time spent using the orienteering trail for some times tables practice and maths work too! We have had lots of positive comments about the trail and it has been used several times since with different groups. All the classes look forward to using this further for outdoor learning throughout the year.

With the wintry weather in mind, the PTFA organised another 'Comfy Day' for the end of the first week back, with snuggly, warm clothing or even onesies being worn, along with a warming cup of hot chocolate (and marshmallows) at breaktime. What a cosy and enjoyable way to end the first week!

We welcomed 'Bounce Beyond' to the school at the end of January for some trampolining sessions, involving all year groups and even staff. Across both sites, all students had the opportunity to join in with some trampoline based bouncing activities and exercises. It was an immensely enjoyable and energetic work out!

The start of February also brought the Spring disco, organised by the PTFA, with the profits going to benefit the school. It was another chance to see some exciting new dance moves- with both the adults and the children showing their best moves on the dance floor again!

Looking ahead, we are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day, as well as the National Year of Reading, after half term too, with various activities and an author visit lined up! We also have various class trips and visitors planned for later in the Spring term, as well as more Forest School sessions at our Akeley site and the whole school Easter Eggstravaganza before we break for the Easter holidays.

Date 2026	Warden/Sidespeople	Prayers	Refreshments	
March 1st	Richard and Essex Close-Smith	Liturgy	Nancy Shepherd	
March 8th	Laurence Gibson/Lyn and Ray East	Tamara Kimpton	Gill Smith	
March 15th	Tamara and John Kimpton	Mothering Sunday	Nancy Pullin	
March 22nd	Gill Smith/Kay Murray	Tony Merediith	Tamara Kimpton	
March 29th	Nancy Pullin/Loreen and Hilary	Gill Smith	Elsbeth Mullineux	
April 2nd	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>			
April 3rd	<b>Good Friday</b>			
April 5th	Andrew Rudolf/Patricia Forbes	<b>Easter</b>	Kay Murray	
April 12th	Richard and Essex Close-Smith	Andrew Rudolf	Lyn East	
April 19th	Tamara and John Kimpton	Kay Murray	Nancy Shepherd	
April 26th	Laurence Gibson/Chris Close-Smith	Tamara Kimpton	Gill Smith	
Date 2026	Flowers	Cleaning	Prayer-board	
March 1st	Lent		Kay Murray	
March 8th	Lent		Lyn East	
March 15th	Lent	Nancy Pullin & Hazlewoods	Tamara Kimpton	
March 22nd	Lent		John Kimpton	
March 29th	Lent		Gill Smith	
April 2nd	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>			
April 3rd	<b>Good Friday</b>			
April 5th	Hilary, Loreen and Others	John and Tamara Kimpton	Kay Murray	
April 12th	Kay Murray		Lyn East	
April 19th	Wedding on the 18th		Tamara Kimpton	
April 26th	Richard Close-Smith	Chris Close-Smith	John Kimpton	
Date 2026	Time	Service	Lead/Preach	Chalice
March 1st	9.45	1662 Communion	Rev Chris Murray	Andrew Rudolf
March 8th	9.45	Morning Prayer	L - Andrew Rudolf. P - Pauline Stanton-Saringer	
March 15th	9.45	Mothering Sunday Family Serv.	Rev Cathy Pearce	
March 22nd	9.45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	John Kimpton
March 29th <i>Palm Sunday</i>	8.00	Said 1662 Communion	Rev Cathy Pearce	
	9.45	Morning Prayer - Mission	Rev Cathy Pearce	
	6.00	Deanery Evensong@ Stowe	Rev Cathy Pearce	
April 2nd		<b>Maundy Thursday</b>		
April 3rd	2.00	<b>Good Friday Meditation</b>	Rev Cathy Pearce	
April 5th	9.45	<b>Easter Family Communion</b>	Rev Cathy Pearce	Lyn East
April 12th	9.45	Morning Prayer	Rev Cathy Pearce	
April 19th	9.45	Common Worship Communion	Rev Hans Taling	Andrew Rudolf
April 26th	9.45	Morning Prayer	Rev Cathy Pearce	