

St Adeline's, Little Sodbury – Parish Profile



St Adeline's church is a small country church with a regular congregation of between 8 and 15. We hold one service of evensong at 6:00pm every Sunday and a Holy Communion service at 6:00pm every fourth Sunday of the month. We also participate in the benefice service where all four churches come together for a service, usually on the 5th Sundays hosted in each of the churches of the benefice in turn. Our services are from the Book of Common Prayer 1662 which provides traditional worship for those in the benefice who prefer it.

The parish is very rural, two and a half miles from Chipping Sodbury, extending over the Cotswold escarpment and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The village has about 100 residents most of whom commute to work as there are few local jobs.

The church has a close connection with William Tyndale who tutored at Little Sodbury Manor. St Adeline's church, in which William would have preached, was built in 1492 next to Little Sodbury Manor. It was rebuilt on its present site in 1859 and is built to almost the same layout as the original chapel and with much of the original materials. We hold a William Tyndale memorial service every year and have ties with the William Tyndale Society who arrange visits to the church for their members and direct their foreign members to the church. We are building on this connection by selling a booklet about the church and Tyndale's life written by one of the parishioners. We are also building up a Tyndale display in the church. This connection brings in foreign visitors, particularly from America, where there is a lot of interest in William Tyndale. Further historic interest is generated by the fact that the village of Little Sodbury is a "Thankful Village" where all the men who went to the First World War returned safely. This is also true for the men of the village who went to World War Two, making us one of the few "Doubly Thankful" villages in the country.

We have been commended for the warm welcome people receive when coming to church and for our singing during the services. The church is open all the time and is visited by people from around the world including walkers on the Cotswold and Monarch Ways. We encourage this by providing free water and squash for the use of visitors to the church. The visitor's book testifies to the peace and beauty they find in the church when they visit.

There is a strong sense of community among the church members who work hard to keep the church in good condition with a regular Thursday cleaning and fellowship session. The non-church goes in the village love and respect the church and provide both direct financial support, when asked, and support for our fund-raising events. The congregation provide good pastoral support for one another, and the villagers, when people have problems and at times of sadness.

Development

We are in the planning stage of a project to add toilet facilities into the church and improve our catering capability. This will make the church more of a community facility enabling fund raising functions and community events to be held. It will also make services more accessible to those who need such facilities and act as a service to walkers, bringing more visitors and revenue to the church.

