



SVB Outlook

August - September 2022



The magazine of the churches of The Sodbury Vale Benefice:
Chipping Sodbury, Old Sodbury,
Little Sodbury and Horton.

www.svbcofe.org.uk

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Contact Hannah if you have a concern about
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adult

Musings of a Churchwarden

Dear Friends

August, the traditional time for that all important rest, a time to put aside the pressures of the working week, to take stock, to be together with loved ones, enjoy the long balmy summer days and be in awe of God's creation. Then looking forward to new beginnings, new chapters in our lives, with September, which brings the start of a new academic year.

“In our Christian lives there’s always opportunities to rest, reflect and start anew through our daily prayer routine.”

But why now, why not in March and April, as, certainly in the Christian calendar Jesus’ crucifixion was the beginning of a brand-new relationship between God and his beloved people, a start to all things good? It was a simple matter of the harvest, as children were an important part of the community, doing their bit with the chores, fruit picking, livestock care, harvesting and preserving. Education was potentially an inconvenience. Then the Education Act of 1880 decreed all children between the ages of 5 and 10 must be educated. By September the harvest was in and work was being planned for the next year. There was less work between September and the beginning of spring, freeing up the children to attend lessons.

In our Christian lives there’s always opportunities to rest, reflect and start anew through our daily prayer routine. In the morning, looking ahead to what the day may bring and, in the evening, taking stock and reflecting on the day’s events, thanking God for his goodness to us.

For us, as we look forward to a new chapter in the life of our Benefice, it’s an important time to pause and look at where we are, where we would like to be and pray together for God’s person to come and join us to lead, support, nurture and empower us all to bring God’s love to everyone.

Paul Jones-Williams

“Pray together for God’s person to come and join us”

Eco-friendly shopping choices



This is not a comprehensive list, just a few ideas to get us all thinking. If you have other “eco-tips” please do share them with us, so that we can learn from each other.

Eco-friendly shopping can cost more in both money and effort. But there’s also a cost to the life of our planet when it is damaged or exploited. Our personal circumstances are all different, so do what is possible for you.

Use your LOAF

Locally produced; **Organically** grown; **Animal** friendly; **Fairly** traded.

For example: support local shops, buy British fruit and veg. in season, eat less meat and dairy, buy free range eggs and meat and sustainably caught fish (MSC), or grow some of your own food.

Save trees

Use recycled paper or tree-free paper (e.g. bamboo, etc). Sustainable toilet rolls, kitchen rolls, writing paper, printer paper and many greetings cards are all available.

Reuse the backs of used paper, cards and envelopes to write quick notes or shopping lists.



Use eco-friendly cleaning products

Some cleaning products contain chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Choose eco-friendly products for your laundry and household cleaning to reduce this negative impact on the planet

Buy fair trade products



When a product has been Fairtrade certified it means it has been produced by a company committed to sustainable production as well as a fair price being paid to the producer. Choose products with the Fairtrade mark on the packaging. Traidcraft products are also

good, as this company was at the forefront of the fair trade movement.

Read company 'green' policies

When you are ordering new goods check the company's green credentials. Do they have a good recycling policy? Can they take your waste? Is there a regular day they visit the area to reduce traffic?

Chris Axford, (Eco Church group)

Phone: 01454 321161, Email: chris@robaxford.plus.com

This is the way we can reach the nation for Christ

An interview with Jules Gadsby

'I don't want to waste my life doing this – I need to go and do some Christian work!'

These were the words of a youthful Jules Gadsby, LICC's new Church Engagement Specialist, as he surveyed his nascent career in banking. Having seen his faith flourish in his university CU, he knew he wanted to serve God completely and full-time ministry felt the best option. But looking back now, he reckons 24 year-old bank worker Jules may not have been totally on the money.



Jules Gadsby

'I didn't understand at the time that me doing my banking job enabled others to have *their* jobs, to be blessed, to earn and save and invest money in good projects. I didn't clock that doing this job well had a good spiritual element to it. My perspective was: "this is just my workplace, but my worship is somewhere else."

'I thought I had to be in full-time ministry, rather than knowing I could minister in and through my work. I didn't necessarily have a full grasp of what whole-life discipleship really meant when I worked there.'

If this all sounds a bit self-deprecatory and depressing, don't worry. Jules won't be going round telling church leaders to hang up their sermon notes and get back to the office – partly because after leaving banking he spent 17 years

as a Church of England minister in Essex and Berkshire, and absolutely loved it. It was the right decision for him, as it is for many.

‘It’s shaped me, and it’s been a privilege,’ he says. ‘Ministering to people and seeing them wanting to go out and be ambassadors wherever they were is a joy – even if church leadership does have its challenges as well.’

It’s telling that when Jules talks about his time in paid Christian ministry, he focuses on seeing people ‘go out’ from church into the world. It points to the reason he’s joined LICC, and why he wishes he’d had a bigger vision of the gospel when he was younger. He’s so excited about what it means to be a whole-life disciple, he wants to help others discover it too.

‘One of the things that struck me when I was a minister was how often people weren’t being helped to see the big picture of God’s kingdom purposes. We often end up thinking the gospel is basically: “We live our lives, die, and go to heaven.” Don’t get me wrong – that is the hope in one sense. But God’s purposes are for a redeemed, restored world, not just a ticket out for his people. His future includes our present. And that means everything we do matters! Overseas mission, leaving everything behind to preach the gospel, is vital – but it’s not for everyone. I want people to see that they can be ministers and missionaries in their own places, wherever they are.

“One of the things that struck me when I was a minister was how often people weren’t being helped to see the big picture of God’s kingdom purposes.”

‘During my time as a vicar, I began to see more and more clearly that we need to encourage Christians to really *believe* that not one part of their lives is uninteresting to God, or outside his purposes – that they can make a difference with Jesus through their management job, or their studies, or their driving, or their chats at the local pub. Personally, I don’t like it when people tell me, ‘You can change the world!’ because I can’t – not on my own. But I *can* make a difference to the world around me and leave the rest to God. And that’s a deeply freeing and inspiring idea.’

Jules’s passion for the whole-life vision doesn’t stop with helping individual Christians get that liberating perspective. He’s also convinced of the wider impact a movement to grow whole-life disciples across the UK could have.

‘I believe this is really the only way for us to reach the nation for Christ – if we stand up and be the church where we find ourselves, out in the world. And I believe this is how the church will grow. For some church leaders, the idea of encouraging people to see their everyday contexts as mission fields can feel like a threat – perhaps they’ll have less time to spend on church ministry if

they do lots of ministry at home or through their work? But that's very likely not true, and it may in fact be the thing that helps grow the church so those ministries flourish too.'

Which leads us on to the crucial question. What does an LICC Church Engagement Specialist do – and why should church leaders want to chat to Jules?

'I'll be working as part of LICC's Church Team, who are great people – they have a huge amount of experience and wisdom, and really know what they're talking about. I'm here to get alongside church leaders and churches of all sizes, demographics, and denominations, helping more of them to embed a whole-life discipling culture, and encouraging those who are already on that journey. We want to see church leaders encouraged, given confidence – to be a blessing to them.

'I'll not just be offering support but listening and learning from those we're privileged to work alongside. I'm hoping to see how we can build communities of church leaders and churches who can encourage one another, iron sharpening iron. I've got my own experience of church life, but I don't know it all. Not by a long stretch. I want to hear from others.

“Being a leader doesn't mean you have to have all the answers. You just have to recognise the right one when you hear it.”

“There's a line from a musical called *Newsies* that my daughter loves, which goes something like: “Being a leader doesn't mean you have to have all the answers. You just have to recognise the right one when you hear it.” That's the hope for our work with churches across the UK – that together we can support each other in growing resilient whole-life disciples.

‘Ultimately, it's about that big gospel vision – a world transformed for Jesus. Encouraging those who aren't confident in their faith to see that they're engaged in a ministry, they're part of this big vision. And equipping them to join in God's kingdom work wherever he's called them.’

Source - London Institute for Contemporary Christianity www.licc.org.uk.

Sketching as Enjoyment

If I submit some of my sketches it may encourage someone to take up a pencil at some stage, which is encouraging. I am no artist but do enjoy the sense of peace and wonderment I get from the activity and looking at nature.

I saw a deer recently up close while looking at scenes near Badminton. I also saw two dogs chasing a hare but the hare was too quick and used dodging techniques to outrun the dogs, who were left panting while the hare got clean away.



Bird on a gate

In one of these sketches, I was prompted by the small bird that came and sat on the gate as I was watching. The backdrop of trees is sublime, and I have attempted to capture the majesty that they bring.

It may not be possible or necessary for everyone to take a car journey to draw. I sometimes draw things in my garden. Looking closely at objects and living things can be quite surprising.

All that is needed to begin with is a soft pencil and some drawing paper, concentration and a little confidence, which will grow, and away you go.

Maybe some people might like to take friends and a picnic somewhere and have a look at each other's work for encouragement and ideas afterwards.

Drawing alone can be cathartic and encouraging as you step back and take a look at the work and be your own critic.

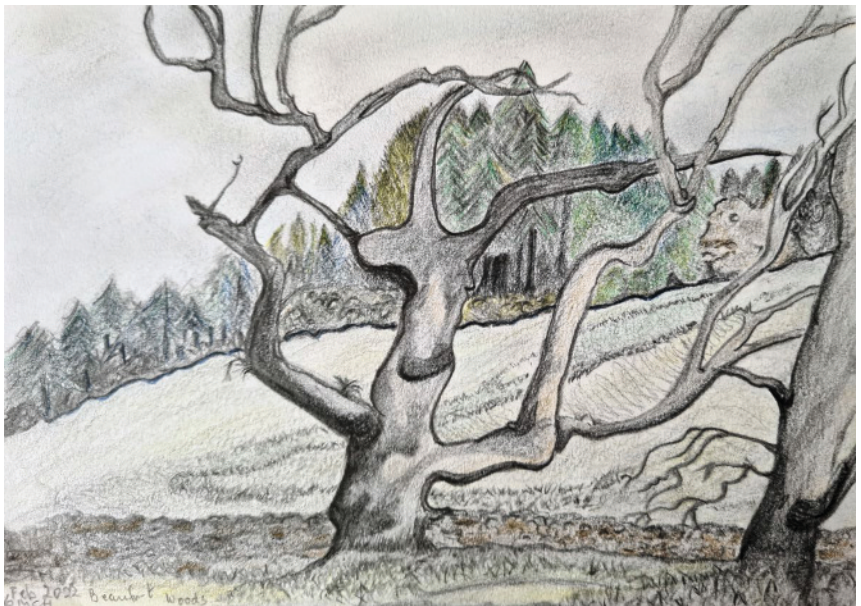
Here is some of my work. Just do it!

Chrissy Stiff

Sketching as Enjoyment (continued)



Peacock at Newark Park



Shapes of Animals

Chrissy Stiff

A message from Bishop Robert

One of the priorities that Bishop Rachel and I share with the Archdeacons, is to spend time with benefices that are 'in vacancy' when we can.

I don't really like the word 'vacancy'. *“Vacancy”* It's better than 'interregnum', between two 'rulers'... which I hope does not reflect the collaborative leadership that we are called to share within the whole baptised people of God. Vacancy implies an absence and that is not my experience of this time.



This is a time, in my experience, that has a deep variety of emotions and activities. There might be a sense of loss, of a friend and pastor, an ending of pastoral relationship, thanksgiving for all that was good, and sometimes a lament if all has not been as it might. Then there will be activity to ensure the continuing ministry of the benefice in worship, pastoral care, and outreach. Activity that at its best enables people to try new things, and explore new or underused gifts. Looking forward there will be thought to be given to the shape of ministry for the future, quite possibly different from the past, since our communities, context and church are managing change. 'Vacancy' doesn't really capture it!

“Think of this time as being one more of ‘expectancy’, a deepening understanding of God’s purpose for the community.”

I recently explored with one parish the idea of this time as being one more of 'expectancy', a deepening understanding of God's purpose for the community, both in the immediate and in the future, of discovering anew what we are called to be as the Church, sharing the love of God in Jesus

Christ and working for the Kingdom. This is not to underestimate the demands of a vacancy, which may rightly also mean stopping doing some things that we have done for many years, but it reframes how we approach the time from one of sacristry to abundance and trust.

I wonder if such an approach might also change how we see the present moment in our national life. If not 'in vacancy' exactly, this is, without doubt, a time of significant transition and challenge as we seek to manage the economic and political impact of a pandemic, war,

international political tension and so much more. This too is a time when so many in our communities are struggling. There needs to be activity, a deep concern that we defend the weak and uphold the poor and oppressed (Ps 82). It is part of our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ to clothe the naked and feed the hungry (Matthew 25).

It is also a time to be focused on the way we will live once this immediacy of this time passes, as it will. For our government, this is focused on 'levelling up'. Whatever your own political perspective, it is a bold agenda whose headlines are growth, opportunity, community, and local empowerment. These are good things that we want to see succeed. But like all such agendas, they need from us all, not just our political leaders, a clear sense of what we are levelling up to. What is our expectation for how we should live together in our society and communities? The vision of the Kingdom that Jesus constantly points us to is of justice, mercy and peace, one that looks to the needs of our neighbours and breaks down barriers, crosses boundaries and has at its heart our fundamental understanding that each and every human being is made in the image and likeness of God, is precious, unique and of infinite value. In the Kingdom it can never be me or mine first, for this is not the way of the Lord.

"In the Kingdom it can never be me or mine first, for this is not the way of the Lord."

Ultimately to level up is but to catch up with what God intends for us, for the nations for all. It will, of course, be about economic growth, stability, freedom, justice, and inclusion... but more deeply it is to recognise the commitment that we owe to each other as a people expectant of the Kingdom.

+ Robert

"Dreamt" is the only English word that ends in the letters "mt".



Copy Deadline

Please send all copy for the October - November issue to the Church Office by **Monday September 19**

Front Cover:

Altar at St John's, Old Sodbury Taken during their 2019 flower festival

Horton Jubilee Choir

On Jubilee Sunday, Horton Choir sang a lovely piece of music especially for Her Majesty the Queen.

The piece was "Sing and Rejoice" by Henry Purcell, very apt for the happy occasion, and thoroughly enjoyed by the choir and the congregation.



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The Opportunities Page

Release your hidden talent.

Have you ever felt that you had a writer hidden within? If so, then you could release that talent by writing something for the Outlook magazine. This gives you the opportunity to start small and grow from easy beginnings. Before long you could be starting on your debut novel and be the new sensation heading for the Times best seller list.

But before we get carried away, even if you are not yearning to be the newest writing talent, you can still send in a few words about some funny or heart-warming incident that happened to you. Perhaps you are a poet and could share a poem with the readers. You could describe something that has happened in the area where you live or in your church, or even write a short story for children or grown-ups.

It only takes 250 words and a couple of photos and you have filled a page of the Outlook magazine. So send in your piece small or large (but not too large as we are only a small magazine) and you will have become a published author.

Michael Stephenson



Another Opportunity!



Voluntary Treasurer required for Old Sodbury Church

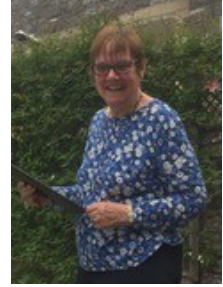
For more information please contact:

John Myers – 01454 312223

Karen Hunter – 01454 319903

or Richard Gilpin – 01454 321323

Mothers' Union Jubilee celebrations



On Monday June 13th, we held a special Jubilee event lunch by kind invitation of Sue Webb and her family.

Sue worked tirelessly to produce a wonderful meal, each course representing a decade of the Queen's reign accompanied by a brief explanation of the period.

Thankfully the weather was fine and members were able to enjoy Sue's beautiful garden whilst eating and celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Our thanks and appreciation go to Sue for organising this event for us all to enjoy.



There Is a Time for Everything

Sometimes we wonder if we are doing the right thing at the right time, especially when life is different from usual. These words from Ecclesiastes remind us that there is a pattern to life and that our feelings and choices have a proper place in that pattern.

There is a right time to do things, a season of life for everything on earth.

There is a time to be born, and a time to die.

There is a time to plant, and a time to harvest.

There is a time for life to end, and a time to heal.

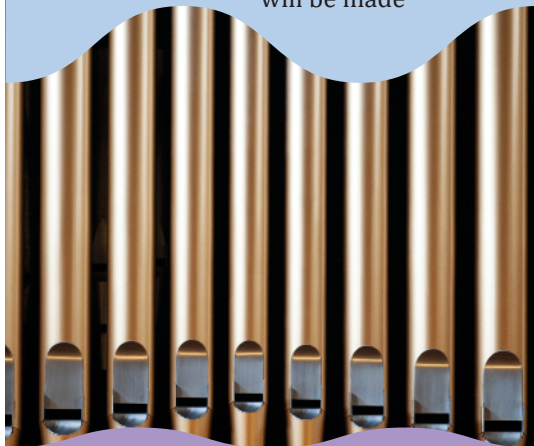
There is a time to take down, and a time to build up.

A concert of Music with Organ

Helen and Nick Sherwood; Jonathan Crow

Free Entry

A retiring collection will be made



3:00pm Saturday 13th August

St Adeline's Church, Little Sodbury

Organ pipes by Josh Applegate



ABBA TRIBUTE BAND

**Saturday 20th August at
CAMERS, Old Sodbury**

Bring your own P.C.M.S. Music starts 7:00pm

TICKETS £15

<http://camers-old-sodbury.eventbrite.co.uk>

or email old.sodbury.friends@gmail.com

or from the usual contacts in the Benefice

There is a time to cry, and a time to laugh.

There is a time to be sad, and a time to dance.

There is a time to create new life, and a time to stop.

There is a time to hug, and a time not to hug.

There is a time to search for something, and a time to stop searching for it.

There is a time to hold on to things, and a time to share.

There is a time to grieve, and a time to celebrate life.

There is a time to be quiet, and a time to talk.

There is a time to love, and a time to hate.

There is a time for conflict, and a time for peace.

The Extended Team

Honorary Assistant Ministers

Meet the members of the extended team who support our worship. They consist of retired clergy (perhaps not quite?) and lay readers, who help David by taking services and helping with other events around the benefice.



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*This magazine is brought to you **Free** by the four churches of the Sodbury Vale Benefice. If you would like to make a small donation towards printing costs which are 65p a copy that would be most welcome. **Thank you.***