



SVB Outlook

December 2022- January 2023



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

www.svbcofe.org.uk

Our Team



The Rector
Post Vacant

Curate
The Revd.
Jane Jones-Williams
07498 878164
revjanejw@gmail.com

Churchwardens

St John's, Chipping Sodbury

Joy Gibson
01454 319288



Paul Jones-Williams
01454 324970



St James', Horton

Tina Hildick-Smith
01454 320380



Richard Needs
01454 329890



St Adeline's, Little Sodbury

Linda Hurst
01454 319183



Brenda Cordy
01454 316447



St John's, Old Sodbury

Karen Hunter
01454 319903



Administrators

Michelle Jenkins, Trish Gailey
and helpers

Advertising

Volunteer required

Safeguarding Nominated Person

Hannah Saunders 07515 915976
hcsaunders-home@talk21.com

Contact Hannah if you have a concern about suspected abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult



Dear Friends

As we approach the end of another year and look ahead to a new year, we've much to reflect on, and to hope for.

We've said goodbye to so many, some close and some not so close. Revd David and Judith Bowers retiring, the loss of dear family and friends including John Myers, one of our church wardens in Old Sodbury, and her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Many loved ones who've meant so much to us.

Our world today feels pretty messy. We're learning to live with Covid. We all know someone struggling with health issues or other challenges; we might be struggling ourselves. War or conflict in many parts with particular concern for Ukraine. The hottest summer on record, sparking more worries about the speed of a climate emergency. The cost-of-living crisis having far reaching effects for everyone. It's deeply concerning. At Christmas, the words echo, 'Peace on earth, goodwill toward men'. 'Tidings of comfort and joy'. When there's little 'comfort and joy' for many people just now. It doesn't seem to make sense.

But perhaps the words from John's Gospel will remind us again that Jesus was born into a very dangerous, troubled and messy world.. *"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth"*. (John 1:14). The reality of what we celebrate every Christmas is that God, as Jesus Christ, came down to earth and lived a life just like us. God lived among us, experienced life in all its messiness, hurt and pain as well as joy and love.

'Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.' We celebrate the birth of the one who came to be the light shining in the darkest places of our world and our lives, and 'the darkness did not overcome it'. However 'messy' things might feel at the moment, I pray that the light, the joy and the love of the Christ-child will shine brightly and bless us all.

With my best wishes and prayers for a very happy and hope-filled Christmas and New Year. **Jane**

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth".

John 1:14.

I pray that the light, the joy and the love of the Christ-child will shine brightly and bless us all.

Recycling unwanted items. Give away for free! Lend for free!

A new initiative!

As an Eco church initiative we are hoping to encourage church members to think about de-cluttering their house and outside space and offering to others the chance to acquire something that would be useful to them – ABSOLUTELY FREE!

By doing this you will have disposed of an item that you no longer need of and will have provided something valuable and useful to a fellow member of your church.

Alternatively you might own a piece of equipment or a tool that you could lend for a specified period of time.

How would it work?

If you had an item that you wanted to “re-home” you would take a photograph and /or write a description of it and display it on the RECYCLING board which will shortly appear in St John’s Church, Chipping Sodbury.

You would need to provide a contact number- phone or email.

Anybody interested can contact you and arrange collection.

No item is too big or too small and who knows you may find something useful for yourself

Why are we doing this?

Many of us will find times hard over the coming winter so this can be a way to help a neighbour or a church member with a free and useful gift.

- We will conserve natural resources such as timber, water and minerals.
- We will prevent pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials.
- We will save energy.
- We will be able to de-clutter our homes in a way that reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators

Catherine Coster- Eco Church Group

Our Children's hopes for the new Rector



Kind Polite Workshops Collective Worship Encouraging
Good listener Friendly Happy Calm-Smile Exciting
Not Bossy Magnificent Fun Fun
Interesting Chatterbox Kind Hugs
Amazing Experimenting Fun Not Boring Generous
Magnificent Helpful Kind Be Funny Not Boring Smiley Amazing
Calm & Gentle Ambitious Befony



Tom would like a happy, smiley person with a friendly voice, keen to share experiences and who should be funny, active and enjoy lots of hobbies such as riding a bike.



Daisy has stipulated a 'girl' rector who likes crafts & drawing.



Nancy wants someone who is kind and lets children be in the services.



Will would like someone who is good with children, includes children in the services and likes football.

My Visit to Oberammergau

I'd heard about the Oberammergau Passion Play from my parents, who went to see it in 1960, and were deeply impressed. I knew that it only happened every 10 years, but this had never coincided with a good year for me to go. I had no idea it was being put on this year, but saw a tour advertised in the paper, and thought that this would be realistically the last opportunity I had to go. Covid had meant that the production had been postponed 2 years. I booked immediately.



The Passion Play is the result of a vow made by the people of Oberammergau, a picturesque village in the German Alps, in 1633.

Their village had been struck by the plague, and 90 villagers had died. A meeting was held in the church, and a solemn vow made to God that, if he would cause the deaths to stop, the community would stage a passion play every 10 years. The deaths immediately ceased, and the play has been staged ever since.



Our party of 40, many of us Christians of different denominations from all over the UK, stayed for 2 nights in a charming hotel in the village, meaning that we had a whole morning to explore and prepare for the 5-hour performance, which took place in the afternoon and evening,

with a 3-hour interval for the evening meal.

The play is performed on a very large stage at the bottom of a vast tiered auditorium like an aircraft hanger. The cast is enormous, numbering possibly hundreds, including children, and the production is lavish: Jesus enters on Palm Sunday on a donkey, Pilate rides in on a horse, and Herod rides a camel. At the cleansing of the Temple, there are sheep and goats, while doves fly out of their baskets when Jesus releases them. There is beautiful music provided by a choir and an orchestra. Significantly, all the members of the cast, choir, orchestra, directors and production team have to be from the village, and most are amateurs. Male members of the cast are not



allowed to grow their hair for 18 months before the play is staged.

The action of the play covers the events of Holy Week, including Easter morning. A lot of emphasis is put on Jesus' debates with the priests and Pharisees. The highlights of the Passion - the agony in the garden, the trial, and the Crucifixion itself - are very well staged and impressive. But for me, the most moving moment was right at the beginning of the play. When Jesus came in on the donkey, he dismounted and immediately went to the children, bending down and giving them his full attention: an authentic and touching moment, recalling Jesus' insistence that the disciples allow the children to come to him.



My visit to Oberammergau made a deep impression on me: a total experience encompassing the beauty of the Alpine scenery, the picturesque village, the warmth and friendliness of the locals, and, of course, the overwhelming impact of the dramatised Passion narrative.

Steve Abbott

Chipping Sodbury Music Society

Tuesday 6th December 2022
7:30 pm Chipping Sodbury Town Hall
Pelleas Ensemble

Playing with "verve and polish" (the Times), the Pelleas Ensemble have captivated audiences across the country



with their enthusiasm, warmth and inventive programming. They have won prizes from the Royal Philharmonic Society and Royal Overseas League.

Chipping Sodbury Music Society

Tuesday 7th February 2023
7:30 pm Chipping Sodbury Town Hall



The Bristol Chamber Choir was founded as Bristol Madrigal Society and the first singing meeting was held on 1st March 1837. Except for the years of WW2 the Choir has rehearsed and given concerts ever since.

SVB Strollers

SVB Strollers are up and running, well strolling at least! We held our inaugural walk on Wednesday, November 9th when seven of us braved the squally showers. Leaving Chipping Sodbury by the footpath at the end of Blanchards, we headed across local fields. A number of these were bought up by Railtrack to divert the River Frome so that the aqueduct carrying it over the railway lines could be raised prior to electrification (green in the photo).



We also walked through the new community woodland and orchard in which several of those present had planted trees. Hopefully in a couple of years we can sample some produce.



Community wood with Old Sodbury church in the background.

We emerged through the allotments to cross the A432 into Commonmead Lane and then continued across more fields, eventually coming onto St John's Way and back to church. We had covered about four and a half miles. The dates for the next six months are on the web site, where details of each new walk will appear. Do join us by just turning up at the start. Hope to see you.

Anne Vickers

Fish and Chip Supper

We had a fun evening on a random Wednesday in October when a group of us gathered at the centre for the sole purpose of eating chips and having a chat!

Rather than being a fundraising occasion we felt that it was important to help to maintain the fellowship and fun part of being in a church. This led to us declaring the event a 'pay as you feel' evening to ensure that no one was precluded from coming because of financial constraints. This involved a convoluted way of distributing tickets, but it really worked well! The cost of putting on the event was £10 per person, so when you got a ticket you also got a small envelope to put some cash in with the guidance if you can afford £10 pay that, if £10 would be a struggle put what you can afford in the envelope, even if that is nothing at all, THAT IS OK, or if the ticket buyer was in the happy position of being able to afford more then we asked them to consider putting in a little extra to subsidise someone else's ticket. We used the envelope system to keep everyone's ticket money confidential, even we did not know who had paid what.

We are hugely grateful for all the people who generously paid more than the ticket 'price' which enabled us to make a small profit, which will go towards essential Church Centre repairs, but more importantly we all had a fun evening.

We got the Fish and Chips from Pisces, and they were delicious, followed by tea and coffee with chocolates. A simple meal shared with friends. Lots of people have asked about the next event, we will hopefully be back in the new year for another Pay as You Feel evening, watch out on the pew sheet and SVB mail for dates as we have to limit the tickets to around 30 to fit into the space!

Michelle and Christine

Copy Deadline

Please send all copy for the February-March issue to the Church Office by **Monday January 16**



Front Cover:

Winter scene by Laura Baker. Will we see any of this this winter?

SVB Benefice Vision Statement

Welcoming, Growing, Connecting

Many of you will be aware that for the process of appointing a new Rector, a profile of our churches had to be produced. This daunting task fell to the churchwardens. We looked back at our previous profile and decided the Benefice had moved on a great deal. It was decided that a new vision statement was required that encapsulated the current atmosphere of our churches as well as what we want to develop.

We felt that the logo below did this with the Cross and the Trinity at the centre we are

Welcoming, Growing, Connecting with God and our Communities

A statement of our vision for the future was also needed to show prospective applicants that as a benefice we want to move forward not only in our Christian faith but to expand his kingdom. This was the statement that was decided upon:

The Vision Statement

Working with Christ at the centre

We seek to achieve these 3 objectives

Welcome all
through
meaningful
prayer and
worship



Grow together
in our love and
faith for God and
as a benefice

Connect with our communities
sharing the love of Jesus to
change lives by the power of the
Holy Spirit

As we seek to fulfil this vision then changes may need to be made.

Connecting with our communities sharing the love of Jesus may mean moving out of our comfort zone meeting with people we don't usually mix with, on Monday to Saturday and not just on Sundays.

We can do none of these things without meaningful prayer and worship. Our faith and love for God must propel us into action but we cannot do any of these things without the power of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who will help us to share the love of Jesus and to change lives for good.

God is out there, already working in people's hearts, but we are his body, his hands and feet on earth that he uses to bring his plans to fruition. May we be ready to help his kingdom to come.

The Children's Society Box Collection 2022

This is a gentle reminder that The Children's Society Box Collection will take place in January. As many of us are still not dealing with cash, I am more than happy to accept cheques made payable to The Children's Society. Of course, if you have boxes I am more than happy to open them also.

The Society has asked me to ask everyone, if you are able, to update me on your Gift Aid status (whether you are still able to Gift Aid, or if circumstances have changed and you are no longer able to, please advise me, and I can remove the Gift Aid from the forms I have to complete.)

I look forward to meeting those of you I haven't seen for a year!

Hilary Hurley

All gloom be with the old year past.

And this year be happier than the last.

May it be a happy and healthy twelve

Months for us all
Joyce Cains



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& Yate

Little Sodbury Christmas Fair



There was a Christmas Fair held in Horton Village Hall at which a number of craft stands displayed a wide range of festive items for sale.

The fair was held in aid of Little Sodbury Church, and refreshments were provided by Macmillan Cancer to raise funds for their charity. There was also a raffle held with a huge number of prizes.

The total raised for the church on the day was £320.80.

Remembrance Sunday at St Adeline's.

Our Remembrance service was honoured this year by the presence of The Royal British Legion who presented the Yate and Chipping Sodbury Standard at the service. The service was led by Mr Mike Swain who led the Act of Remembrance when the Legion laid a wreath at the font. He also gave a very moving sermon in keeping with the sentiments of the day.



A new adventure in rural France



Our dear friend and sister in Christ, Alison Barton, left for Chaleix in north east Auvergne on the 15th August. Alison, Pansy and all household effects have started a new adventure, living with her son, Dick, on his cattle farm.

A dream now realised and at 84 years old, one which reveals a brave, courageous and resilient soul.

We shall miss her! A lady of numerous talents; gardening, dress making, tailoring, mending and making-do, furniture restoration, wall building, laying under floor heating. You name it, Alison does it all with a wry sense of humour!

We wish you every blessing Alison. Hoping it's 'A bientôt' not 'Au revoir.' Enjoy your retirement.

Memories of John Myers

As we gathered at Old Sodbury church on Remembrance Sunday, the sombre occasion was made all the more so, as the congregation took in the news that John Myers had died the previous day. John loved the church and the village, and devoted so much of his time and effort to helping and supporting both. In spite of increasing poor health, John's dedication and commitment to the church never wavered, as he carried out his roles as churchwarden, chairman of the Friends' fundraising committee, Fabric officer, Health and Safety officer to the PCC and so many more. The true impact of his loss to the church and the village will perhaps never be fully appreciated, until we slowly begin to recognise all the small things he did that went unnoticed and that we took for granted.

We send our love to Anne and the family, and hope that the memories below will show just how much John was loved and respected by all.

"John and I have worked together for many years; he has been a true friend, always there to support and to chat things over. I shall miss him greatly, as will the whole church family. The last time I saw John, I asked him how he was to which he replied with a smile "Tickety boo!" I often had to ask how he really was and rarely received a convincing answer. John never complained; he put on a brave face and carried on with courage and persistence as he worked for his beloved church. John is now really "Tickety boo" as he is at peace with his Lord." **Karen Hunter**

"I will miss bumping into John while walking our dogs through the churchyard and fields. But the memory that will always stick in my mind is of John at a Friends' Burns Night supper, dressed in a kilt with a fuzzy ginger wig and tam o'shanter and looking very much the 'wee Scottish laird' as he stood to toast the Lassies, to which Angela Barber replied. A memorable evening full of laughter made possible by two great characters of the village and church. Thank you John." **Gill Davis**

"When we first started attending OS Church we were given a very warm welcome by John. He went on to become a good friend. He had an impressive knowledge of the church's history which he would enthusiastically share at any opportunity. He will always be loved and greatly missed." **Joy and David Fussell**



“When we moved into Old Sodbury village two years ago during lockdown, John and Anne were some of the first people to welcome us, together with Monty, the dog. John became a regular visitor and a friend, popping in on his walks for a coffee and chat. John helped us immeasurably to integrate into the community and particularly the church. He knew everyone and as Church Warden was central to everything. We will miss him greatly.” **Linda and Richard Hore**

“Dear John will be missed so much by so many people - a real gentleman.”
Joyce Cains

“On a cold winter’s day during lock-down, while sharing coffee and doughnuts as we took a break from tidying the churchyard, John was remembering his 60th birthday party, and how he had intended having a 70th, but covid had scuppered his plans. John was always working in the church or churchyard. He loved our church and did so much to keep it running; he loved a party, and was the force behind so many of the Friends’ social events. Thank you, John; we will miss you so much.”

Sandra Witherden



“When the Friends’ founder, John Bullock, resigned as Chairman due to ill health, he expressed the wish that John Myers should be his successor, knowing that the high standard he had set for all functions would continue. That wish has exceeded all expectations!” **Ann Ward**

“When Richard and I moved to Old Sodbury, John was one of the first persons to welcome us and invited us to a party so that we could meet other people from Old Sodbury. Richard was a retired architect and John soon became 'the tape boy' and 'ladder boy' whilst Richard inspected the church roof. They also worked very well together organising Friends of Old Sodbury events. John was extremely kind and helpful with Richard's funeral, including reading the lesson and helping to choose the burial plot we thought Richard would like - a view of the countryside looking to the Welsh hills.”

Jill Kingscott

Christmas Services in the Sodbury Vale Benefice 2022



Sunday 11 Dec.

6.00pm Carol Service at St James', Horton
Followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Friday 16 Dec.

6.00pm Carol Service at St Adeline's, Little Sodbury

Sunday 18 Dec.

5.00pm Carol Service at St John's, Old Sodbury
No morning Service at Old Sodbury

7.00pm Carol Service at St John's, Chipping Sodbury

Saturday 24 Dec. Christmas Eve

3.00pm Crib Service at St John's, Old Sodbury

3.00pm Christingle at St John's, Chipping Sodbury

4.30pm Christingle at St John's, Chipping Sodbury

6.00pm Christmas Communion at St James', Horton
Preceeded at 5.00pm with mulled wine and mince pies

8.00pm Christmas Communion at St John's, Chipping Sodbury



Sunday 25 Dec. Christmas Day

9.30am Family Communion at St John's, Chipping Sodbury

11.15am Family Communion at St John's, Old Sodbury



Sunday 1 Jan. New Year's Day

10.30am Benefice Service at St Adeline's, Little Sodbury



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.



Revd. Steve Abbott
abbott.steve@btinternet.com



Revd. Pauline Green
pauline.green936@gmail.com



Revd. Canon Rob Axford
rob@robaxford.plus.com



Revd. Chris Mason
revd.chris.mason@gmail.com



Revd. Christine Axford
chris@robaxford.plus.com



Revd. David Powe
[01454 777745](tel:01454777745)



Revd. Canon Catherine Coster
catherinecoster3@gmail.com



Wully Perks (Reader)
wulstanperks@gmail.com



Mike Swain (Reader)
swain189@btinternet.com

*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.***