



SVB Outlook

April-May 2025



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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A word from Jane

Dear friends

By the time this edition is published, we'll be well into Lent and turning our faces towards Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, followed by the awful days that followed as he turned to face the cross. Then the Resurrection. New life. New beginnings. New hope!

At the beginning of Lent, Rev. Chris and I attended the Bishop's Gathering in Gloucester, and as we drove, we talked about what we'd either given up or taken up for Lent. Remarkably, it was the same thing. To clear out, to sort out the 'stuff' we have in our houses. Well, that's the hope anyway, and it's definitely something I need to do. Years of accumulated items, from clothes, my theological study books, things 'just in case', our children's belongings - which I think will strike a chord with many of you. They leave home, but why have we still got so many things of theirs? Our daughter, Phoebe, sent us a comment, courtesy of someone on social media, which says:

"Hope is something we're all called to share, alongside love."

'The absolute injustice of being asked to come and take away the boxes of junk that you've been storing at your parents' house for 20 years.'

Our son Sam is 6ft 4ins and soon after he left home, we discovered he'd been lifting the loft hatch a little and throwing things into the space without using a ladder, so it was a mess. Thankfully, it's much improved. And Chris tells me she's making progress, sorting a box or drawer a day when she can.

So why am I telling you all this? It's all to do with hope. Not just the hope that we'll clear our 'stuff', but the hope we can clear our minds and have an uncluttered relationship with Jesus; and hope is something we're all called to share, alongside love.

Our Easter services are listed in this edition, and we hope to see you at some of these; maybe at the Sunrise Service at 6am in Old Sodbury? A perfect start to Easter Sunday.

Blessings

***Then the Resurrection.
New life.
New beginnings.
New hope!***

Rev. Jane

Chipping Sodbury Bellringers Win the Stinchcombe Cup

On Saturday 1 March the Chipping Sodbury team of bellringers entered the annual 6-bell striking competition organised by the Wotton-under-Edge Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers. The competition was held at St Martin's Church, North Nibley. This is a lovely church in a beautiful setting overlooking the Severn Valley. At the time we went, the churchyard was covered in primroses.



A striking competition is an event in which teams of bell ringers compete against each other to ring the bells as accurately as possible avoiding mistakes, with the team making the least faults being declared the winners.

Four teams entered the competition this year – Dursley, Chipping Sodbury, North Nibley and Coaley – and the competition was judged by Tony Bulteel, a ringer at St Mary Redcliffe Church in Bristol. We rang 120 changes, known as a touch, of a method called Grandsire Doubles and were pleased to come second out of the four teams, thus winning the Stinchcombe Cup awarded to the runners up. The team from Dursley came first as they have done for a number of years. One day we may be able to beat them with a bit more practice!!

We ring for the Sunday morning services at Chipping Sodbury and also for other occasions such as the Remembrance Sunday Parade when the bells are half-muffled. We tolled a bell when Queen Elizabeth died and rang to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles.

We would welcome new ringers – either beginners or “returners”. It’s one of those things that, having learnt, you don’t forget how to do however long the gap! You can start when you are tall enough to reach the bell rope or even leave it until you retire. Some ringers are still ringing in their 90s as it is a very good way to keep fit! Please contact Edna Cooper on 01454 549581 if you are interested.

Attached is a photo of the winning team with the Stinchcombe Cup (left to right) - Edna Cooper, David Lee, Chris Cooper, Alison Holliday, Dave Clark and Fred Willington. **Chris Cooper**

SVB Strollers



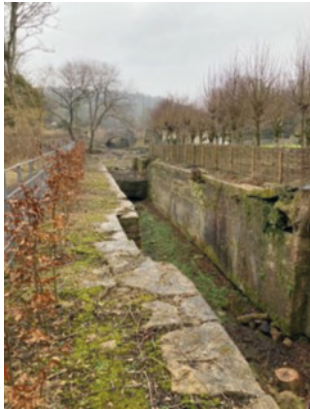
Our January walk was cancelled due to illness of both people and Anne's dog, meaning no leader, so we were doubly pleased to meet in February for a walk along part of Golden Valley, near Stroud. Being half term we were joined by a couple of grandchildren who led the way from Frampton Mansell along a minor road and then down through woods until we reached the old tow path of the Thames and Severn Canal by the end of Sapperton tunnel, pictured here.

We soon reached the Daneway Inn where we were hoping for coffee

or hot chocolate but found the door locked! Luckily the landlady came out and said if we waited till she finished hoovering she would serve us.

Unfortunately at this point a little gentle rain

started as we set off again, as you can see from the group picture. It didn't last long.



It is an interesting area of industrial archaeology, with the remains of bridges and locks alongside the path

After a steep but short scramble up to the railway crossing we were



soon back at The Crown Inn for a welcome lunch.

Do come and join us on the third Wednesday of the month, it really is a stroll!

Join us on Saturday 12th April for our Book Sale.

This will be held upstairs in the **Church Centre in Chipping Sodbury, from 10 a.m.**

Part of the Yarn Festival will be downstairs, so we are holding the café over the road in Church, so do join us for delicious cakes, tea or coffee.



Photo by Courtney Cook on Unsplash



Faithful Generations

You'll remember I advertised the Faithful Generations Day being held at Gloucester Cathedral on 1 February. What a magnificent event it was! The day was for all ages, especially for grandparents to go with grandchildren and families but many people were there on their own or as couples.

I thought I was only taking my granddaughter Bethany (6) but agreed in trepidation the evening before, that my grandson George (3) could come too. Some of you know George is **very** active and I wasn't sure I could cope with two on my own.

As promised, there were many varied activities in the cathedral. First, George crawled into a teepee with a labyrinth set inside, then both Bethany and George made colourful pictures reflecting rainbows, trees and God's covenant, and drew prayer hands before watching some Godly Play. We moved on to the Treasure Hunt, finding treasure and hanging it on the prayer tree.



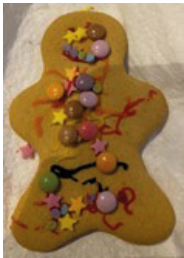
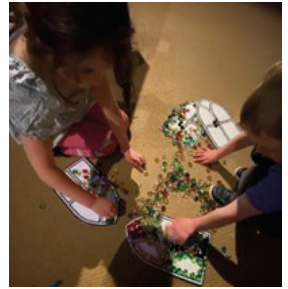
'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'.



Now some prayer boats to be made and set afloat. Bethany's boat floated well, but maybe George's boat didn't last as long – see red sheet on the side....

In the beautiful Chapel of St Thomas, stained glass windows were designed.

It was Candlemas so doves, candles and a gingerbread Grandma to make – and eat



There were many more activities, but most of all, Bethany and George loved dancing in the Lady Chapel with Bishop Rachel in the DJ session and then learning a liturgical dance telling the story of Anna and Simeon in the Temple to perform later at un-Evensong. George was thrilled to be allowed to operate the music system that everyone danced to. I can't share photos from the dancing here but have some moving and joyful videos from the rehearsals I can show you.

The time came for un-Evensong, a beautiful service led by Bishop Rachel, taking the shape of Evensong, with some additions drawing together the activities of the day's workshops. As we reflected on the feast of Candlemas, a display of candles and doves made by everyone celebrated the peace of God and light of Christ. Then



finally, children and adults together presented the dance taught during the day.

Towards the end of un-Evensong, George disappeared from my sight. To my horror, he was kneeling on the dais, before the altar, very calmly looking at the

Nativity scene set there.... right in front of Bishop Rachel.... I've had to crop the photo as the original includes members of the choir and the public, so sadly the full majesty is missing.

Bishop Rachel later told me their hearts melted because George had been very, very gently stroking Baby Jesus, and that's what it's all about. Jesus demanding the little children be brought to him.

What a wonderful time, and as we said goodbye at the door, George told Bishop Rachel 'It was the best day ever'. **Rev Jane**



From A Rocha's 2025 Easy Eco Tips Calendar.

Visit <https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/> for more eco tips.

APRIL - Spend time in nature.

Spending time appreciating God's creation can be an act of worship. Nature can be experienced when we notice an insect, hear a bird sing, feel the earth beneath our hands or even when we watch a documentary. There is strong evidence that nature is also good for our mental health. Try to immerse yourself in nature every day, even for just a few minutes and give thanks to God for His good creation. Further ideas can be found at arocha.org.uk/ideasto-enjoy-nature/



MAY - Support pollinators.

Nothing says Spring like the buzz of a bee! But bees are declining because of habitat loss, climate change and agricultural intensification. Tuesday 20 May is World Bee Day, so look around to see how you can improve habitats for bees and other pollinators - even small efforts make a difference.

Read more about bees, butterflies and habitats that support them such as wildflowers, in our Target 25 resources at arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/target-25 and pray for the rejuvenation of these crucial pollinators.

Chris Axford - Eco Church Group

Helping special children in India

Arpana is a very special school in Bangalore, India, for children with special needs. It is a community with which we have had longstanding relations, thanks largely to diocesan connections through Revd Canon David Bowers, our former rector.

It is a happy place where young people receive education through loving care and attention during their formative years. They could very easily be marginalised because of their disabilities, but instead Mrs Saduri and her staff provide them with care and quality education and prepare them for skills they can take with them when they leave.

Children come from families of all religious backgrounds – whether Hindus, Muslims, or Christians, and there is no discrimination. And they all learn Bible verses together.

A team visited Arpana from SVB in 2019 and brought back reflections on their visit. They were impressed by the practical skills the children learn there. These include operating a simple printing press, and taking orders, e.g. for letterheaded notepaper, for the areas they come from.

Their funding comes through the Karnataka diocese of the Church of South India (CSI). The Gloucester diocese also channels funds to support this work. Locally Mrs Saduri, who is now past retirement age, works hard to maintain financial support, to publicise their work, and train staff. We receive reports from her regularly through our contact Tania Manners, and she much appreciates the prayer support we provide. She tells of how Arpana recently took part in a competition for special schools, organised by the Association of Christian Teachers. They were proud to be awarded first place in choreography and singing. They also organise special activities in local communities.

Kindly remember Mrs Saduri and her staff in your prayers. **Frank Gray**



Arpana CSI School for Special Education - Mentally Challenged

1.1K likes • 1.1K followers



Home Communion – Who is it for?

There are times in our lives when for various reasons we cannot come to church and therefore cannot receive communion. This might be a permanent situation or due to a temporary lack of mobility.

For some people taking communion is an important part of their spiritual journey, if that is you or someone you know, we have a team of people (clergy and lay) who would be very happy to bring communion to you. For us it is a real privilege, so if you would like to receive communion at home, please do let us know by contacting the office or the clergy.

Chris

Drawing Apart

Jesus loved to draw apart to be alone with God. For example, after feeding the 5000, which must have been quite a stressful situation for him, St. John records that he withdrew to a mountain by himself. This is a great example for us, his followers. We live in a very busy, noisy world. With all the pressures of life, including social media, how can we relate to God? What we call Prayer - communicating with God - can easily be squeezed out. In this febrile atmosphere, drawing apart to be with God is increasingly important for Christians.

We may have a favourite place to do this. Mine is the corner of my study/ bedroom, where I have a comfortable chair and can put the books I need on the bed in front of me. Of course, I have the luxury of being retired, as many of us church members are. But have we programmed this time of meeting with God into our day? Even when we are retired, there seems to be so much to do. However, for our peace of mind and heart, we all need to draw aside. If Jesus needed to do so, how much more do we! I suggest that in the remaining weeks leading up to Easter, and then in the period after it when we are reminded of the Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, we might think about building a regular time of prayer into our day.

Even if you already have this worked out, maybe your routine could be improved or helpfully changed. I suggest that 10 minutes a day is a good starting-point, but it's amazing how quickly the time passes once you get going. In the next "Outlook", I'll make some suggestions about how the time can helpfully be spent, although I wouldn't claim to be an expert on prayer, and am myself learning and adapting all the time. It would be good to hear any helpful ideas that you might have.

Steve Abbott



Copy Deadline: May 19

Please send all copy for the **June-July** issue to the Editor or the church office by this date.

Front Cover:

St John's by Steve Abbott

Taizé-style Worship in the Sodbury Vale Benefice

What is Taizé?

The Taizé community– named after the small village of Taizé in central France – is an ecumenical monastic order of Roman Catholic and Protestant monks drawn from thirty countries across the world. It was founded by Brother Roger Schütz in 1940 to establish a place of peace and justice through prayer and meditation. The Church of Reconciliation was built there in 1962. Today it is a significant place of Christian pilgrimage and is a magnet for people of different cultures, traditions and ages, especially for thousands of young people who flock to the community each year to share in its way of life.



What are the key ingredients of Taizé-style worship?

- **Welcome** – Taizé worship is open to everyone
- **Music** – simple chants repeated to help with prayer and meditation
- **Readings** – Bible or reflective readings
- **Silence** – space for a period of silence is included in the service



Why offer this kind of worship?

To respond to the thirst and yearning from people for a more contemplative, flexible form of worship which has fewer words and more space for quiet reflection, lighting candles and joining in the chants with the Taizé Singers

When will Taizé worship be available?

During 2025, on the 5th Saturday of the month at 5.00pm for under one hour:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| □ St John's Church, Chipping Sodbury | 29 th March |
| □ St John's Church, Old Sodbury | 31 st May |
| □ St James' Church, Horton | 30 th August |
| □ St John's Church, Chipping Sodbury | 29 th November |

What happens now?

Make a note of these dates; come along and try Taizé worship for yourself!

What happens next?

Throughout the year, the clergy and Taizé Planning Group will listen to feedback from those attending and review all the arrangements.



Mothers' Union

Our meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 2pm in the Church Centre, Wickwar Road. We have a varied programme this year and **Everyone is Welcome**.

Information about Mothers' Union and a copy of our programme can be found on our notice board in St. Johns, Chipping Sodbury.

Our **January** meeting turned into a 'catch up' session with each other after Christmas and also Helen informed us of events planned for the year and news sent from Mary Sumner House which was shared with all the members.

Our **February** meeting was a talk, from Rev. Steve Abbott, about his visit to Patmos. Although Steve had written a very detailed report for Outlook on his visit, he was able to show us slides of his visit which were really interesting and brought his talk 'to life'!! I think Patmos will go on a lot of people's 'places to visit' list !!!!

We also enrolled a new member, Alice, who has recently moved to the area. We hope she will be very happy living in our beautiful town and will make a lot of new friends through Mothers' Union and beyond.



Details about our March meeting will be in the next edition of Outlook.

Hilary Hurley

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Summer Teas at Old Sodbury Church

As the weather turns warmer, we begin to turn our thoughts to organising the summer teas at Old Sodbury Church once again.

Last year we ran the teas for 20 weeks during the summer and hosted approximately 700 people. That is a lot of cups of tea and lots and lots of cake!

Some of our visitors are walkers who are exploring the Cotswold Way, or families out for a stroll on a Sunday afternoon. Members of the church congregations and visitors from across the area call in, too. It is lovely to see everybody.

Last year we had singers and musicians of all different kinds, who entertained us on some of the Sunday afternoons. One of the local groups was the Go Vocal Choir, who meet to rehearse in the Village Hall. Some of the other musical groups are part of the Yate and Sodbury U3A. When the weather was good some of them sang or played their instruments in the churchyard, which was very special to see and to listen to, too.

This year we plan to start the teas on Sunday May 11th 2.30 – 4.30pm, with a ‘80th Anniversary of VE Day’ themed afternoon.

We couldn’t do the teas without the faithful support of all the volunteers from our church family, who often come along with other family members and their friends to serve cakes of all different kinds and endless cups of tea and coffee. Without them the summer teas would not be possible.

Last year we raised £2,330. A donation of £500 was made to Old Sodbury School’s New Classroom Appeal; the remaining proceeds went towards the costs of maintaining our ancient building.

If you would like to bake a cake for the teas or help us to serve them, then please call me on **01454 314074**.

Otherwise, we hope to welcome you with tea and cake at Old Sodbury Church during the summer afternoons.

Joy Fussell



Mothers' Day Tea

Many of you may remember that we held an afternoon tea for Mothers' Day in 2022. Many people said it was a joyous afternoon, listening to music and sharing sweet and savoury treats along with scones , jam and cream. Some people even enjoyed a glass of bubbles. We are holding an afternoon tea again on

Saturday 26th of April
from
1pm to 3pm .
at
St John's Church
Chipping Sodbury



There will be a quality raffle and a regift shop, with all proceeds going to church funds.

Contact Jane for tickets 07773037722, **£5** for afternoon tea with coffee or tea , **£8** with bubbles, under fives **free** , five to ten years **£2.50**. **Jane Youell**

The Children's Society

Thank you to everyone for your most generous donations this year and I can let you know that the grand sum of **£713.41** has been raised through your boxes.

'Last year 72,000 young people were supported across the country and £8 million pounds in funding, raised with our partners, provided for early support hubs that will boost young people's mental health'.

A Reminder

I am still looking for a volunteer to take over the box collection for this most worthy cause next year. If you think you might be interested and would like further information, please contact me on 07970902391.

Hilary Hurley

A Children's Society Prayer

Jesus, you came as the light of the world; we pray for the places where there is darkness and danger, and for the work of The Children's Society in sharing your light.

Regular Church's Service Pattern

	St John The Baptist, Chipping Sodbury	St John the Baptist, Old Sodbury	St James the Elder, Horton	St Adeline, Little Sodbury
Service Time	09:30am	11:15am	11:15am	6:00pm Until Oct 26
1st Sunday	St John's Praise Child friendly informal service	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer	Evensong
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	Evensong
3rd Sunday	All-Age Communion	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer	Evensong
4th Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
10:00 am every Thursday Holy Communion at the Church Centre, Wickwar Road, Chipping Sodbury				
8:30 am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday Morning Prayer via Zoom. Details from Jane				
10:30 am on any 5th Sunday Holy Communion in one of the four churches				

Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 13th April

Regular services in each of our churches

Maundy Thursday 17th April

10.00pm	Holy Communion	Church Centre, Chipping Sodbury
7.00pm	Holy Communion	St John's, Chipping Sodbury

Good Friday 18th April

2.00pm	Service at the foot of the cross	St John's, Chipping Sodbury
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Saturday 19th April

7:00pm	Easter Vigil	St Adeline's, Little Sodbury
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Easter Sunday 20th April

6:00am	Sunrise Service	St John's, Old Sodbury
9.30am	Easter Holy Communion	St John's, Chipping Sodbury
11.15am	Easter Holy Communion	St John's, Old Sodbury
11.15am	Easter Holy Communion	St James', Horton
6.00pm	Easter BCP Holy Communion	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 and lay readers, who take services and help with other events across the benefice.



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