Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

KNOWING JESUS... MAKING JESUS KNOWN!

OUR Community Chaplain

IT HAS NOW been three months since I was so warmly welcomed to St Stephens, and it has been a real joy to see how God has been at work in such a short time.

I HAVE loved getting to know the wonderful family and children's provision already in place, including: See &Know, Youth Church, Outburst and Welcome Space, to name just a few.

As well as working with are amazing young people to put on our Youth Church Nativity.

Alongside this, I have begun spending regular time in both St Stephens Junior School and St Stephens Infant School, building relationships with staff and students. Through clubs such as: crochet club and lunchtime Bible club, the prayer corner, and leading collective worship.

Ultimately, creating safe spaces where children and young people can hope, explore faith, and ask questions.

2025 also brought with it Harvest and Christmas services, along with opportunities for students to visit the church building and explore what church is.

For some, this was their very first experience of church. Together with other church volunteers, I also had the privilege of sharing the true message of Christmas with students through Christmas in a Box.

Continued overleaf>

FEBRUARY 2026

Mission Partners with St Stephens:

- Beloved
- Bristol City Centre Soup Run
- Bristol Schools Connection
- Christian Aid
- Community of the Sisters of the Church
- Emmaus
- Harvest for The Hungry
- Bristol Churches City Fund
- One25 Project

St Stephens

Church Road
Soundwell
Bristol BS16 4RH
0117 956 6257

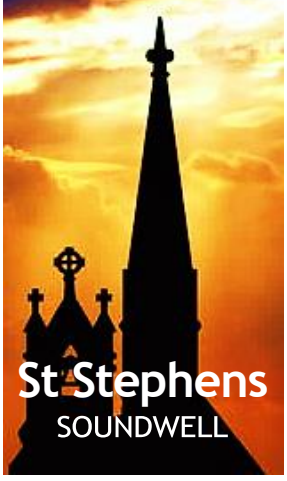
visionatststephens@gmail.com

www.saintstephensoundwell.org

saintstephensoundwell

@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER 1131503



Our Community Chaplain

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Exciting Changes to Children's Work

AS we look ahead to 2026, we are excited to continue all of the above while also introducing some new developments. As our church family continues to grow, we have been reviewing how we support our children, young people, and families on Sundays and beyond. Our heart is to create spaces where every child and young person feels welcomed, known, and able to grow in faith.

YOUTH CHURCH ON SUNDAYS

From 1st February, we will be making some small but exciting changes to how Youth Church runs on Sundays.

Youth Church will begin their time together in the Church Hall, where they will receive an initial blessing, pray together, and explore the Bible.

They will then join the main congregation in church to share in Holy Communion or receive a blessing. Following this, Youth Church will be invited to the front of church to share what they have been doing that morning, before returning to help clear away.

As part of this, they will help set out tables for refreshments after the service, and possibly some chairs if time allows.

Youth Church will also move into clearer age groupings, including Primary-aged children and those in Years 7–9, with group names to follow. We are exploring the idea of letting the children and young people choose these names themselves – so watch this space!

The church room will become a crèche space, offering support for families with babies and very young children who may need a quiet space.

We are also looking ahead to providing more for our teens and young adults, beginning with Youth Alpha, which we hope to launch at the end of February.

Family Fun Mornings

We are also excited to be launching Family Fun Mornings in 2026. These mornings are aimed at primary school-aged children and will take place during school holidays,with a creche available for younger siblings. For our first one this year– taking place on the 16th of February, expect pancakes, activities, and plenty of fun!

If you are able to help on the day –whether making pancakes, serving drinks, or supporting activity stations–please do come and speak to me.

If you would like to attend with your family, please see the poster for full details and sign-up information.

Bubble Church

AS YOU may know, St Stephens is launching something really exciting in 2026 called Bubble Church.

This new initiative builds on our existing family and children's outreach and offers a church service created especially for families with babies and young children.

Bubble Church is a short, engaging 30-minute service that includes action songs, a Bible story, puppets, and a simple hands-on activity. There is also time before or after the service to share breakfast or lunch, depending on when it runs. The simple, repeated liturgy helps children feel secure, confident, and fully involved.

It is not too late to get involved! If you would like to volunteer–whether in the kitchen, welcoming families, or as a puppeteer–please speak to Elaine, who would love to hear from you.

Thank You

THANK you for your continued support of our children, young people, and families. Please keep praying for this work as we step into this next season together.

Elaine

WE are delighted and overjoyed that Elaine has joined us as our Community Chaplain.

This role has been created to build on the existing ministry that was already taking place in the five schools within our Parish, with the local young people's groups and the Youth and Families work in and around Church.

Our vision is that, in time, with the connections Elaine will forge, that all the different places and organisations that support children, youth and families in the Parish will be linked to one another, hopefully enhancing the ways they reach their own goals and aims for young people, and also bringing Jesus into the mix. By being a visible presence in the community and around church life, Elaine, will be making Jesus known across the Parish.

Elaine has already had such an impact in this role - of which we are thankful and grateful to God working through her. And her plans for the future are exciting and amazing!

But we need your help too!!

IN the period between September 2025 and August 2026, the cost of the Community Chaplain role is estimated to be about £34,600, *(which includes employer costs such as National Insurance, Pension Contributions and some expenses).*

So far, through applications to Grant Funding organisations, we have been very successful in securing grants of £29,000 towards the first year of the 3-year contract but there is a shortfall, which your PCC has committed to meet.

This shortfall, of £5,600 needs to be met through church funds, between now and the end of August.

This is in addition to the normal costs of running our Church.

Will you help to enable this work and give your financial support?

If so, please will you mark your financial gifts as 'Chaplain Fund' and we can ensure they will only be used for this purpose.

Continued on page 3 >

Community Chaplain:

< *Continued from page 2*

If you'd like to make a regular gift, then we can help you with that by setting up a standing order payment from your bank.

Please do talk to Lorraine, Sandy or myself about this.

From September 2026 onwards, the financial picture is not so rosy, because as the initial grant funding secured begins to reduce, so our costs will increase.

We will of course continue to make further Grant Funding applications, but each Grant Funder will want to see how we, at St Stephens Church, are joining them by making contributions towards the role—both salary and ongoing ministry costs involved.

So, your gifts are vital in helping us secure more grant funding.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Thank you and bless you.

Lisa

BRING your Bible!

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

7.15pm to 8.15pm

WE meet in the Church Room for anyone who wants to join in with simply reading the Bible!

Though the scriptures in the Bible are thousands of years old, they still hold immense power, wisdom and guidance for us today!

There is no set structure or any course work to worry about and **everyone** is welcome!

FORGING FRIENDSHIPS

WE ARE a friendly and welcoming bunch of people at St Stephens Church, Soundwell, but friendships and welcome don't have to stop at the church door.

Would you like to forge a friendship and visit someone in their home? Or would you like to welcome a new friend, someone you might already know from your church, to spend a bit of time with you in your home?

If either of these ideas spark something in you, take your fancy, or it's for you... whatever it is please be in touch!

Jenny Bishop 07 801 989 490 or jenannb75@hotmail.com

Rev **Lisa Wigmore** 0117 9574 297 or lisawigmore66@gmail.com

Tuesday 9 to 11.30am

10th & 24th February

Please note that under 17s must be accompanied by an adult).

IN OUR CHURCH ROOM

Join us for COFFEE/ CHAT & COMPANY

11AM WEDNESDAY 4th FEBRUARY

at the ***Turnpike*** *on Soundwell Road.*

A time to be, be known, and be together.

Christmas Cards!

HERE IS the list of the people who chose to write just a card to all our 'Church family' —which was then displayed in church.

JENNY AND BILL **BISHOP**
ROSEMARY **BOULTON**
JAN AND BILL **BROOKSHAW**
MAGGIE **COOK**
LIN AND SANDY **COOPER**
MARLENE **CREWE**
MARGARET **DODGE**
SUE **CLEMENTS** & DAVID **ELDRED**
PAT **GARNER**
JOYCE AND GEOFF **HARRIS**
CAROLYN **HAWKINS**
SUE AND MARTYN **HUMPHREY**
JAN **JOHNS**
LINDA **KRAUSE**
PAT AND BILL **LAWRENCE**
ANITA **LEAKEY**
JULIA AND JIM **MERRIFIELD**
CAROL AND CLIVE **MILLARD**
GILL AND GORDON **OGBORNE**
DAVID **PACKE**
JAN AND DAVE **PARKER**
TIM, OLIVIA AND SOPHIE **PARKER**
TRISH **PHIPPS** & KEITH **WINTER**
ST STEPHENS **INFANT SCHOOL**
GILL AND KEN **TIZZARD**
LISA, PAUL AND TOM **WIGMORE**
BECKY AND JOE **WILSON**

Christingle *in review*

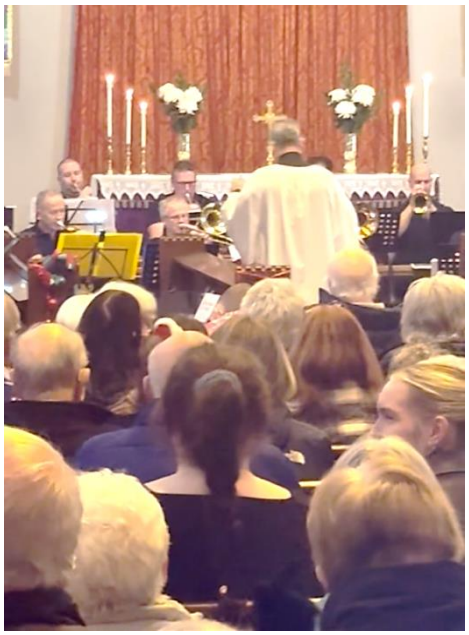
THERE were two duplicate services held on Christmas Eve, to cater for the expected attendances, and true to form over 480 people attended in total!
Thanks to everyone who helped with preparations for the event, before, during and after, as there truly was a lot of work involved!

Carols by Candlelight

THE event took place on the Sunday before Christmas and was well attended, and in fact the church was full to bursting!

The Soundwell Brass Ensemble provided accompanying music, along with or alternating with, the church organ music played by Lin Cooper.

We were also entertained by special presentations from the Church Choir.

The whole service ran continuously with barely a break with everything on the AV screens and there was a great atmosphere created.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Chat

2.30PM

(2PM for a cuppa)

11th & 25th FEBRUARY

4th, 11th, 18th & 25th MARCH

in the Church Room

BIBLE CHAT is a time of looking at the week's scripture readings and sharing thoughts and insights of your own and those of others.

AND, of course, hear what God might be saying to us as we meet in His name.

There will be refreshments, cake and a warm welcome for all before we start if you arrive early.

There is no need to book in, or to even attend every session.

Co-Church Wardens

A CHURCH Warden holds the main responsibility for the smooth running and maintenance of any Church of England Church.

THEY are supported by and in turn, support the Vicar, clergy and licences ministers in all they do.

Gill Mayo has been our fabulous Church Warden for 8 years now and, while it is recommended each Church has 2 Church Wardens, we at St Stephen's have only had one for many years.

A good number of years ago, we created the role of Assistant Church Wardens, and we have a small team of people who either support Gill on Sunday mornings or who hep with the building maintenance.

It has worked well. But… we are missing not having our full quota of Church Wardens to cover all the regular responsibilities.

As you may recall, I have written about or announced the need for another Church Warden for quite some time.

And your PCC has been pondering this for the last year or more.

So, in recent months I have been praying hard about this and felt God nudge me into finding another team of people to support Gill as our only Church Warden.

This team would share all the roles of a Church Warden between them, depending on their time and skills.

During the weeks of prayerfully seeking God's will, I felt led to speak with 3 people about this.

I am thrilled to thankful to God, and to them, that they have agreed. Therefore, I would like to announce that we have appointed the following people as Co-Church Wardens:

Tim Parker: main focus = buildings and maintenance

Paul Sanderson: main focus = buildings and maintenance (with an Eco slant)

Julia Merrifield: main focus = Statistics for Mission Report, Triennial Inspection and associated paperwork and possibly ad hoc paperwork.

WHAT A TEAM!!

Please join me as I continue to pray that one of these fabulous people might step into the Church Warden role alongside Gill at our APCM this year, with the other 2 continuing to be Co-Church Wardens. Whether this happens or not, we are in good and safe hands.

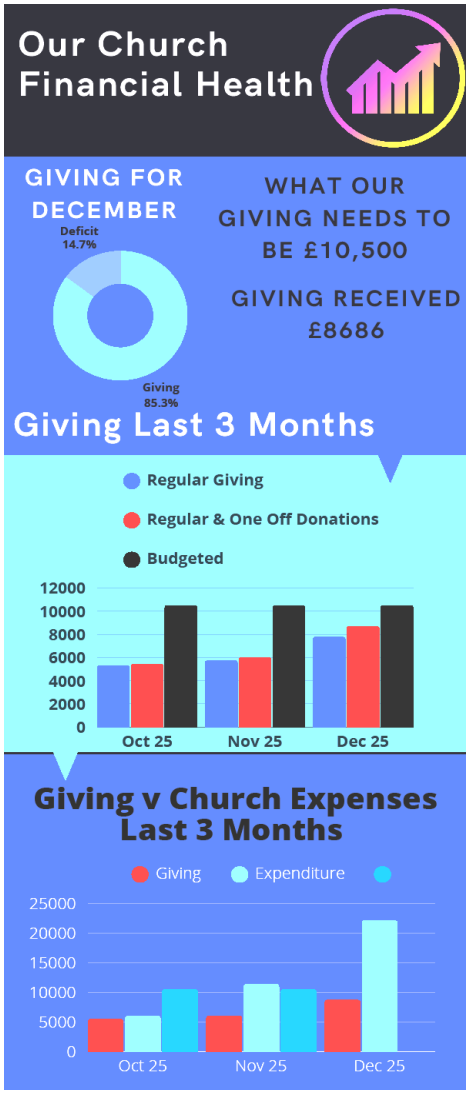
Every blessing. **Lisa**

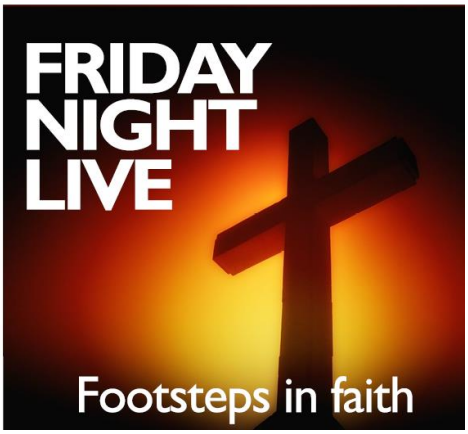
Bubble Church news

WE ARE beginning a new Church Service around Easter time, called Bubble Church.

It will take place in the Church Hall for half an hour on Sunday's, initially once a month, at a time yet to be agreed. Bubble Church is Church for families with children around 7 years of age and under.

PLEASE can those of you with young children complete a survey, either through the link or QR code. Link to the Bubble Church survey: https://forms.gle/1adpmBzhdYPSWLFQ9





13th February
6.30PM in Church

INFORMAL WORSHIP FOR ALL AGES

An hour of exploring what life with faith is all about in an hour of getting to know others, through informal song, prayer, discussions, followed by refreshments after wards in the Church Room. Come if you know Jesus, come if you don't, let's grow in footsteps of faith together!

Please note that this meeting of Friday Night Live is a week **earlier** than usual, ie: it is NOT the usual 3rd Friday of the month.

READINGS & COLLECTS

SUNDAY 01 FEBRUARY
4th Sunday of Epiphany

1 Kings 17:8–16; Psalm 36:5–10
1 Corinthians 1:18–end; John 2:1–11

GOD OF HEAVEN, you send the gospel to the ends of the earth and your messengers to every nation: send your Holy Spirit to transform us by the good news of everlasting life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY 08 FEBRUARY
2nd Sunday before Lent

Genesis 1:1–2:3; Psalm 136
Romans 8:18–25; Matthew 6:25–end

ALMIGHTY GOD, give us reverence for all creation and respect for every person, that we may mirror your likeness in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY
Sunday before Lent

Exodus 24:12–end; Psalm 2
2 Peter 1:16–end; Matthew 17:1–9

HOLY GOD, you know the disorder of our sinful lives: set straight our crooked hearts, and bend our wills to love your goodness and your glory in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY
Lent Sunday

Genesis 2:15–17, 3:1–7; Psalm 32
Romans 5:12–19; Matthew 4:1–11

HEAVENLY FATHER, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FEBRUARY CYCLE OF PRAYER *BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK*

01	Church Musicians	Matt, Jenny & Lauren Gait Sheila Galsworthy, Pat Garner Julie, Simon & Ruby Goss	Wiltshire Place Witcombe Close Woodchester
08	Young people's uniformed organisations	Brian Grant & Christine Jan Halton, Janice Harland Geoff and Joyce Harris,	Woodland Avenue Woodland Way Yew Tree Drive
15	Trinity Theological College	Ivor Harris, Ruby Harrison Carolyn Hawkins, Stella Hoare Mike and Jayne Hudd	Acacia Avenue Acacia Close Acacia Road
22	Children's Society	Cherilyn Hughes, Jean Hulbert Neil, Carey, Marin & Eliza Humphrey Sue and Martyn Humphrey	Alexandra Close Alexandra Gardens Alexandra Place

SUNDAYS: 8am BCP **Holy Communion** (on the 1st & 3rd Sunday).
10am **Community Worship Service** weekly.

Prayer Ministry is offered after the 10am Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays *or at any other time by request, so do please ask as necessary.*

WEDNESDAYS: 10am **Service of Holy Communion** weekly.

FEBRUARY DIARY

03 Tuesday	1.30pm	**Knit & Natter** *in the Church Room* (then weekly)
04 Wednesday	11am 7.15pm	**Coffee/Chat/Company** *at the Turnpike Pub* **BRING YOUR BIBLE** *in the Church Room*
05 Thursday	10am 1.30pm	**See & Know** *in the Church Hall* (term-time weekly) **Men's Group** *in the Church Room*
06 Friday	1.30pm 7pm	**Pensioner's Group** *in the Church Hall* **Outburst** Youth Club *in the Church Hall*
09 Monday	10.15am	**Retreat Memory Café** *in the Church Hall* for Dementia sufferers and their carers
10 Tuesday	9~11.30am	**WELCOME SPACE** *in the Church Room*
11 Wednesday	2pm 7.15pm	**BIBLE CHAT** *in the Church Room* **BRING YOUR BIBLE** *in the Church Room*
12 Thursday	2pm	**Ladies Group** *in the Church Hall*
13 Friday	6.30pm	**FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE** *in Church*
16 Monday	10am	**FAMILY FUN DAY: Pancakes!** *See advert on page 7*
17 Tuesday	7.30pm	**GANG SHOW!** See advert on page 5
18 Wednesday	10am 6.30pm 7.15pm	**ASH WEDNESDAY** Special morning Service **ASH WEDNESDAY** Special evening Service **BRING YOUR BIBLE** *in the Church Room*
19 Thursday	1.30pm	**Men's Group** *in the Church Room*
20 Friday	1.30pm	**Pensioner's Group** *in the Church Hall*
23 Monday	10.15am	**Retreat Memory Café** *in the Church Hall* for Dementia sufferers and their carers
24 Tuesday	9~11.30am	**WELCOME SPACE** *in the Church Room*
25 Wednesday	2pm 7.15pm	**BIBLE CHAT** *in the Church sofa corner* **BRING YOUR BIBLE** *in the Church Room*
26 Thursday	2pm	**Ladies Group** *in the Church Hall*

MARCH DIARY

03 Tuesday	1.30pm	**Knit & Natter** *in the Church Room* (then weekly)
04 Wednesday	11am 2pm 7.15pm	**Coffee/Chat/Company** *at the Turnpike Pub* **BIBLE CHAT** *in the Church Room* (then weekly) **BRING YOUR BIBLE** *in the Church Room*
05 Thursday	10am 1.30pm	**See & Know** *in the Church Hall* (term-time weekly) **Men's Group** *in the Church Room* (then fortnightly)
06 Friday	1.30pm 7pm	**Pensioner's Group** *in the Church Hall* **Outburst** Youth Club *in the Church Hall*
09 Monday	10.15am	**Retreat Memory Café** *in the Church Hall* for Dementia sufferers and their carers

SERVICES at 10AM & 6.30PM

THE service will include the '**Imposition of Ashes**', a tradition reminding us of the need of repentance, and for God's forgiveness, and during which each person is signed with the cross on their forehead, using ash from burning of previous year's Palm Crosses.

AS the signing is done, a minister will say,
'Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.'

DIAL-a-SERMON

Listen to this week's Sermon on your phone:

0117 456 2090

(Cost is the same as a local call)

OR

CLICK-a-SERMON

Visit our website and use the audio link to listen on-line

http://saintstephensoundwell.org

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

• Revd **Lisa Wigmore**
Vicar, 52 Gladstone Street
Soundwell, Bristol BS16 4RF
Telephone 0117 957 4297

• Revd **Sandy Cooper**
Associate Minister, 1 Deerhurst
Soundwell, Bristol BS15 1XH
Telephone 0117 967 2621

• **Elaine Brewster**
Community Chaplain
Telephone 07 902 095915

• **Gill Mayo**
Church Warden
Telephone 0117 956 9796

• **Lin Cooper** *Director of Music*
Telephone 0117 967 2621

• **Lorraine Sanderson** *Treasurer*
Telephone 0117 940 1829

• **Jenny Bishop**
Pastoral Co-ordinator
Telephone 0117 9575729