

Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

KNOWING JESUS... MAKING JESUS KNOWN!



I AM never quite comfortable preparing messages for Holy Week midway through Lent; it seems to shortcut the journey.

KEEPING some distance between Good Friday and Easter Day seems even more important given their huge emotional contrast. Despite this they properly belong together – all of a piece in God's purposes for humanity and indeed for all creation. Together the events of those momentous days hold together hope and a future in the face of failure and hatred.

On Good Friday we remember Jesus being betrayed, abandoned by the justice system, brutalised, scourged and eventually crucified. On that harrowing day we plumb the depths of what human beings are capable of. We are invited to see ourselves in the scenes, recognising **our** actions and attitudes and need for forgiveness, cleansing and rescue.

We also come face to face with God's travail and inexhaustible love for us.

'Forgive them Father,' says Jesus from the cross, *'for they do not know what they are doing.'*

By contrast, the Sunday dawns with the mystery of an empty tomb and then breaks into a strange then glorious hope – not a vague wishful thinking or crossing fingers kind of hope, but a grave-bursting, life transforming hope which makes a difference to the everyday as well as to the future of the Universe!

THE raising of Jesus from the dead is no temporary revival of a body or a reincarnation.

This is resurrection – a history defining event which secures an age to come.

Everything now looks different, including God and the divine nature.

Although these days and their events are full of their own significance they are not meant to be separated.

Without Easter Day the crucifixion of Jesus is another example of the cruelty and inhuman behaviour with which we are all too familiar.

Without the resurrection there is no reason to call the Friday 'Good'.

Once again hate will have overcome and extinguished love.

Continued on page 2 >

APRIL
2026

Mission
Partners with
St Stephens:

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

St Stephens

Church Road
Soundwell
Bristol BS16 4RH
0117 956 6257

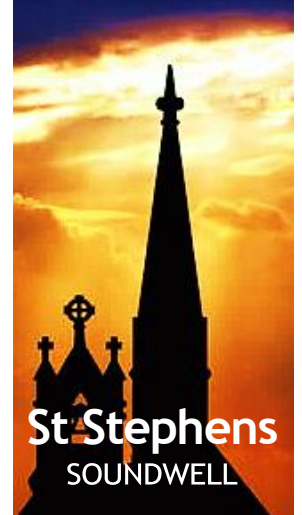
visionatststephens@
gmail.com

www.saintstephen
soundwell.org

f saintstephen
soundwell

@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER
1131503



St Stephens
SOUNDWELL

Holy Week & Easter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Living in a world as we do where stories of premeditated or random violence, evil and anguish surround us like wallpaper it is easy to become desensitised or cynical.

Without noticing, hope is subtly evacuated from our horizons and from our hearts.

Every now and again our eyes are lifted by a story or action – maybe even a movie – which declares love will trump hate, but it seems transient and illusory.

The events of the first Good Friday and Easter Day confirm our deep instinct.

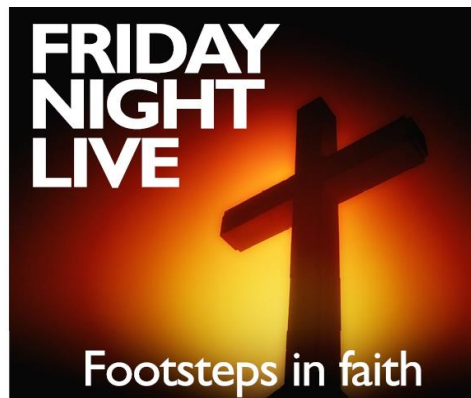
That love will have the last word – because love had the first word.

The God whose nature is love brought the universe into being will not see it end in futility.

Today as you read this, whether you feel closer to Friday's sorrow or Sunday's joy, may God's Holy Spirit lift your heart and horizons through His eternal love and that power which raised Jesus from the dead.

May the joy of the risen Lord Jesus, fill you to overflowing.

Lisa x



FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

Footsteps in faith

17th APRIL

6.30PM in Church



Welcome Space!

Tuesday 9 to 11.30am
14th & 28th APRIL

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

IN OUR CHURCH ROOM

WEDNESDAY Bible Chat

in the Church Room

2.30PM

(2PM for a cuppa)

APRIL 8th & 22nd

MAY 6th & 20th

JUNE 10th & 24th

JULY 8th & 22nd

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!

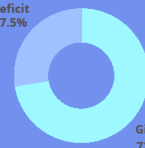
There is no set structure or any course work to worry about and everyone is welcome!

Our Church Financial Health



GIVING FOR FEBRUARY

Deficit 27.5%

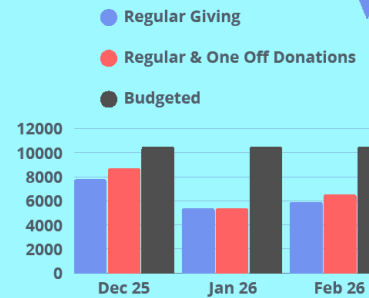


Giving 72.5%

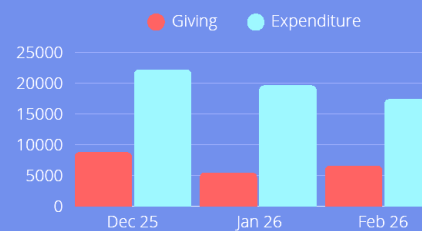
WHAT OUR GIVING NEEDS TO BE £10,500

GIVING RECEIVED £6515

Giving Last 3 Months



Giving v Church Expenses Last 3 Months



Join us for COFFEE/CHAT & COMPANY



11AM WEDNESDAY 1st APRIL

at the Turnpike on Soundwell Road. A time to be, be known, and be together.

Family Fun Day *in review!*

ON Monday 16th February, St Stephens Church was delighted to host its first Family Fun Morning—and what a wonderful morning it was!

We welcomed 22 families from our community, all ready to join in the fun. On arrival, families were greeted by our friendly team of volunteers and given a treasure hunt to complete together.

As they searched the church hall, children ticked off pictures and worked out a secret word to receive a sticker prize.

Each picture was linked to a scripture from Matthew 4, telling the story of Jesus in the desert, giving families the opportunity to explore the narrative in an engaging and interactive way.

After completing the treasure hunt, families were invited either to enjoy freshly made pancakes or to explore a variety of activity stations set up around the hall, before swapping over to experience both. Activities included junk modelling, pancake flipping, cross decorating, hope prayers, pancake crafts and much more, with something to suit all ages and abilities. There was such a warm and joyful atmosphere throughout the morning.



It was a real blessing to stand back and see so many smiling faces and families enjoying time together.

Here's what some of our families had to say:

"We had a lovely time at the family fun morning on Monday. There were lots of different crafts to do and the children loved creating with the junk modelling. We even had pancakes cooked for us. Thank you to everyone at St Stephens for putting this fun morning on for us."

"Thank you for a lovely morning! What a perfect way to start half term for families — we all had such a lovely time. It was so nice to see so many school families together."

"We had great fun at the pancake event which started with a warm, friendly welcome. There was an excellent variety of activities which covered the age range and mix of abilities. Thank you for all your hard work — we look forward to attending future events."

Following the success of this event, we are excited to be planning more Family Mornings in the future, with the next one taking place during the Easter holidays.



SMp Musical Theatre Company

REDGRAVE THEATRE

ONE SMALL TOWN.
SEVEN THOUSAND STRANGERS.
A STORY THAT BROUGHT THE
WORLD TOGETHER.

COME FROM AWAY

BOOK, MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
IRENE SANKOFF AND
DAVID HEIN

21 - 25 APRIL 2026
REDGRAVE THEATRE

COME FROM AWAY

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AIR TRAVEL IN THE USA ABRUPTLY STOPPED, STRANDING THOUSANDS WORLDWIDE. THIRTY-EIGHT PLANES WERE DIVERTED TO GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND, WHERE RESIDENTS WELCOMED 7,000 UNEXPECTED GUESTS WITH FOOD, SHELTER AND KINDNESS.

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, FEAR GAVE WAY TO FRIENDSHIP, AS STRANGERS BECAME A COMMUNITY UNITED BY COMPASSION.

SHOW TIMES:
TUESDAY - FRIDAY: 7:30
SATURDAY MATINEE: 2:30
SATURDAY EVENING: 7:00
ALL TICKETS £22 (INCLUDING BOOKING FEE)

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE VIA:
REDGRAVETHEATRE.COM

OR
SCAN HERE: 




HOLY WEEK

AN **EASTER TRAIL** will be in the church grounds from Palm Sunday (29th March) onwards for you to explore the Easter Story at a time that suits you and your families.

There is a quiz to solve by visiting each display set up around the Church grounds, and also QR codes to access via smart phones, for further details of the Easter Story.

- **MAUNDY THURSDAY:** 2nd April
6.15pm – **PASSOVER MEAL:** see separate advert for details.
- **GOOD FRIDAY:** 3rd April
11am: If you'd like company to walk the Easter Trail then other folk will be around to join in with you. There might even be a hot-cross bun or two on offer to sustain you!
1pm: **Quiet Reflection** – personal space in church for you to sit with God. Quiet music will be playing.
2pm: **The Last Hour at the Cross** – a service of scripture, reflection, prayer and song.
- **EASTER DAY:** 5 April
10am: a **Service of Celebration for All Ages** together, with Holy Communion (and chocolate!)
If you would like to, please bring along a flower or two to help decorate the large wooden cross.
We look forward to welcoming you at St Stephens to share in the Easter Story.

READINGS & COLLECTS



SUNDAY 05 APRIL

Easter Sunday

Matthew 28:1–10

GOD OF GLORY, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUNDAY 12 APRIL

2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22–32; Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–end

RISEN CHRIST, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father. Amen.

SUNDAY 19 APRIL

3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36–41;

Psalm 116:1–3, 10–end

1 Peter 1:17–23; Luke 24:13–35

RISEN CHRIST, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope: strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SUNDAY 26 APRIL

4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42–end; Psalm 23

1 Peter 2:19–end; John 10:1–10

RISEN CHRIST, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

A reading for Easter

FOR YOU

I CREATED a perfect world and gave it away freely.

I showered rain on the hillside, splashed sun on the morning.

I made flowers and snowflakes, rainbows and sunsets, crafted wild frontiers full of adventure and discovery.

I waited patiently, listened carefully, Held you constantly and loved you completely.

I came to a stable and gave up my glory, laid it aside in the town of Bethlehem.

I wandered the earth, vagrant and homeless; shared my cup with sinners and my bed with the poor.

And down through the ages I have taken the mocking, The false accusations, the gutter-press lies.

I have heard your debating and witnessed your reason, your weak explanations and sweet alibis.

I opened my flesh to the lash of a tyrant.

Surrendered my back to the leather and lead.

I carried a cross one tortuous journey

Through a sea of anger and an ocean of death.

I went down to the depths of pain and destruction,

took the nails and the scorn of the hammer-blow hate.

Bore the lies of the years

and the bitter destruction,

Then visited hell in a cauldron of tears.

I have given without condition and way beyond measure, made your children laugh and your people sing.

I have healed and restored, and patiently waited – supplied you with grace, given life to all things.

I have given – held nothing back; surrendered my spirit and broken my heart.

I kept nothing from you – not even my son.

Stretched myself to the limits and gave you every part.

I did all this for you... for you... for you...

for you... for you... for you... for you... **FOR YOU...**

By **Dave Hopwood**

Sandy

ON 5th JULY, Sandy will have served for 20 years as an Associate Priest in Soundwell, and from this date, he wishes to go at a slower pace.

Due to his own age and Lin needing more support with her mobility, this is why Sandy feels this is the right time.

The Archdeacon wants to affirm that this means Sandy will be stepping back from the PCC from that date, its committees and being part of the Ministry Team.

During the Vacancy, Sandy will not be taking oversight or leadership of the church.

What Sandy will continue to do is: Lead worship once a month, Bible Study Group (currently called Bring Your Bible) and remaining part of the congregation.

Please do pray for Sandy and Lin as Sandy prepares to, and makes this change of gear.

Thank you.

HOW SAFE ARE YOU?

IMAGINE YOU are dozing on the sofa while your dinner cooks on the stove in the kitchen.

A tea towel is too close and catches fire, which rapidly spreads.

Would you be aware of it in time to get outside?

IN our congregation we have Simon Bartlett who is an experienced Firefighter, and he wants to ensure we have efficient SMOKE ALARMS in our homes. In order to do this he is able to provide some advice and free alarms.

IF you think you need an alarm or advice on how to use it, please come and speak to me or directly to Simon.

Gill Mayo

MAUNDY THURSDAY



PASSOVER MEAL

2nd APRIL 6.15PM

OUR Service will be in the context of experiencing the Passover together, just as Jesus did with his friends. Book up on the sign-up sheet (at the back of Church) for a simple but free two-course meal.

We expect to finish around 8.45pm.

NB: please bring a soup bowl, a soup spoon, a knife for buttering a roll, a dessert spoon, a glass for wine and a glass for water.

Thank you.

NEW CHURCH START TIME



FROM 7th JUNE



BUBBLE CHURCH is a Sunday church service especially for babies, toddlers, and young families.

ITS aim is to bring church to where people are; to allow young families to have a church for them, a space to engage with God and have a time of fellowship. The service includes action songs, a Bible story, puppets and a simple activity and even time to offer breakfast/a cup of tea.

Bubble Church is for families to be together, where everyone joins in!

It is best suited to children under seven years old in.

It is a service to worship, learn about Jesus and develop Christian faith. It follows a simple liturgy which is repeated each week to meet the children at the development level they are at.

This means there is confession and absolution, scripture, singing praise, a sermon, and prayer in every service.

It's not just a way into church; it IS church!

Having surveyed our community, and learned from the experience of over 80 other churches across the country that have already begun a Bubble Church Service, we know the best time of day for this is first thing in the morning on Sundays.

So, to enable us to hold a Bubble Church Service and be open and welcoming to the young families of our community, and also to continue all that we do on Sunday mornings, we need to move the start time of our service back, just half an hour, to 10.30 am.

We will do this every Sunday, as having differing weekly start times will be confusing for people.

This is what your Ministry Team and your PCC have agreed:

8.30am: Bubble Church Team set up things in the Church Hall.

9.15am: Families arrive for a croissant and fruit breakfast.

9.30am: Bubble Church Service starts (*plus access to the kitchen in the Church Hall for Café Central volunteers*).

10am: Bubble Church Service finishes.

10.30am: Regular Church Service and Youth Church starts.

Bubble Church will begin initially once a month, and hopefully move very soon to twice a month... or perhaps even weekly?? But let's not jump ahead of ourselves.

Why are we doing this?

SIMPLE: to attract more families and young people to Church, so that they might come to know and follow Jesus, and then, just like us, to make him known to others. It's what our faith is all about - sharing Jesus.

Our **Vision Statement** says:
ST STEPHENS... KNOWING JESUS AND MAKING JESUS KNOWN.

Which is just what Bubble Church is all about. So, we are simply carrying out what we believe, through prayer and collaboration, and through following the prompting of God's Holy Spirit, as the will of God for us in Soundwell.

What this means for us.

WE will be launching Bubble Church on Sunday 14th June, and yes, I know that will be my last Sunday at St Stephens, but what a wonderful way for me to go... to leave a legacy of something new and vibrant!

We had planned to begin a month or so earlier, but in order to ensure we have all the resources we need and to avoid holidays (*the lovely Elaine is going on her belated honeymoon during May*), June is the right time.

So, to recap, from June 7th 2026, our Sunday morning Service and Youth Church will begin at 10.30 am.

The café in the Church Hall will continue as usual, after the service.

Over the years, we have begun our worship services at a variety of times. I remember, as I am sure many of you do too, that for decades our service used to start at 10.30 am.

We have also begun our worship at 9.30 am and 11 am, before the change to 10 am around 9 years ago. So, we are used to change at St Stephens!

I pray we will embrace a change again, for the benefit of those who are yet to know Jesus and to enable us to share our love of God in Jesus with them. Please pray for Elaine, who has and continues to be doing a fabulous job, part of which is making Bubble Church a reality at St Stephen's.

Please pray for the team that is supporting her in this, and also for all of us as we navigate and get used to this slight change.

And please also remember:

We Follow Jesus and He is the one who tells us to **'Go, make disciples'** (MATTHEW 28:19). Which is precisely what we will be doing through Bubble Church.

Thank you. *In His service.* Lisa x

EASTER Family Fun sessions

MONDAY 13th APRIL & THURSDAY 16th APRIL

FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE: BOOK YOUR PLACE:

We will be running two identical family fun sessions.

Please SIGN UP to one of the events below.

Monday 13th of
April

2pm to 3.45pm

OR

Thursday 16th of
April

10am to
11.45pm



<https://forms.gle/Xmzcx6Se3XNYTgPR8>



<https://forms.gle/bN9A5tbdJbAajxZp9>

All families welcome!
Activity stations will be set up for you to go round as a family.

Hot cross buns, cornflake cakes and refreshments will also be served.

This is a **FREE** event (with option to make a donation) put on by the church but spaces are limited so SIGN UP is essential.

*The activities are aimed at Primary age however any younger siblings are more than welcome to attend, we will have a creche space available.



saintstephensoundwell



ststephens_soundwellbristol

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

KNOWING JESUS... MAKING JESUS KNOWN!

Church Road, Soundwell, Bristol BS16 4RH www.saintstephensoundwell.org



APRIL CYCLE OF PRAYER *BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK*

05 Bristol Churches City Fund	Stephanie, Jacob, Tommy & Finley Pascoe Wayne, Rosie, Annie-Mae & Joseph Pearce Trish Phipps, Shirley Potts	Church Road Cogan Road Colston Close
12 Harvest for the Hungry	Christine Priddis, Dot Randall Nicola, Andy, Amelia & Erin Read Sarah, Mark, Damien & Lauren Reid	Colston Street Cotswold View Cranham Close
19 Bristol Schools Connection	Colin and Tessa Rice, Maria and Ethan Ridler Peter Robbins, Monica Robinson Kerrie, Kevin, Kaiden, Kester & Kolby Rowland	Crispin Way Crossfield Road Crown Road
26 St Stephens Infant School	Lorraine and Paul Sanderson Marianne Saunders, Anne Scott Jayne, Chris & Phoebe Selway	Crownlease Deerhurst Deerswood

SUNDAYS: 8am BCP Holy Communion (on the 1st & 3rd Sunday).

10am Community Worship Service weekly.

10am Youth Church in the Church Hall 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.

APRIL DIARY

01 Wednesday	11am	Coffee/Chat/Company at the Turnpike Pub
02 Thursday	10am 1.30pm 6.15pm	See & Know in the Church Hall (term-time weekly) Men's Group in the Church Room MAUNDAY Thursday Meal in the Church Hall
03 Good Friday	11.30am	Easter Trail in Church Grounds and Hot cross buns available in the Church Room followed by Quiet Hour in Church LAST HOUR at the Cross in the Church
05 Sunday	10am	EASTER SUNDAY All-age Service in Church
07 Tuesday	1.30pm	Knit & Natter in the Church Room (then weekly)
08 Wednesday	2pm 7.15pm	BIBLE CHAT in the Church Room BRING YOUR BIBLE in the Church Room
09 Thursday	2pm	Ladies Group in the Church Hall
13 Monday	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café in the Church Hall for Dementia sufferers and their carers
	2pm	FAMILY FUN AFTERNOON in the Church Hall
14 Tuesday	9-11.30am 4.30pm	WELCOME SPACE in the Church Room Finance Committee in the Church Room
15 Wednesday	7.15pm	BRING YOUR BIBLE in the Church Room
16 Thursday	10am 1.30pm	FAMILY FUN MORNING in the Church Hall Men's Group in the Church Room
17 Friday	1.30pm 6.30pm	Pensioner's Group in the Church Hall FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE
22 Wednesday	2pm 7.15pm	BIBLE CHAT in the Church Room BRING YOUR BIBLE in the Church Room
23 Thursday	2pm	Ladies Group in the Church Hall
27 Monday	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café in the Church Hall for Dementia sufferers and their carers
28 Tuesday	9-11.30am	WELCOME SPACE in the Church Room
29 Wednesday	7.15pm	BRING YOUR BIBLE in the Church Room
30 Thursday	1.30pm	Men's Group in the Church Room

MAY DIARY

01 Friday	1.30pm 7pm	Pensioner's Group in the Church Hall Outburst Youth Club in the Church Hall
05 Tuesday	1.30pm	Knit & Natter in the Church Room (then weekly)
06 Wednesday	11am	Coffee/Chat/Company at the Turnpike Pub

FROM THE REGISTERS

SINCE JANUARY

Wedding:



● MARCH 14th: **Bethany Morris** and **Benjamin Pockett** married at St Stephen's Church, Soundwell.
Please hold them and their daughter, Bonnie, together with their families and friends and all those who love and support them in your prayers.

 **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