

*Wishing everyone a very
Happy Christmas and
a peaceful New Year*

From everyone at Bodicote Church.

**You are very welcome to join us at any
of our special Christmas services**

14th December	6pm	Carol Service
<hr/>		
Christmas Eve	4pm	Crib Service
	11pm	Midnight Mass
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Christmas Day	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	9.45am	All-age Communion

THE MAGAZINE OF
**St John the Baptist
Parish Church**



Serving the communities of
Bodicote, Cherwell Heights and Longford Park
December 2025/January 2026

Hark the glad sound! Advent is almost upon us!



We are entering the season of candles and carols and announcements from angels. It's a time when we look especially for hope and joy: the light amidst the long nights, when we recognise how hard life can sometimes be and celebrate the things that keep us going.

There are a great many things I am thankful for this Advent: I am thankful for the warm and generous welcome we have received arriving in Bodicote, I am thankful for all the many wonderful things already happening in this parish (and for the wonderful people who have been leading them), and I am particularly enjoying my quiet moments in our beautiful church when

I unlock in the morning. I am thankful too for the crisp brightness of winter sunshine and for hot cups of tea on cold mornings. Little moments of joy are always worth searching for.

As well as a time to give thanks, Advent is a time of new beginnings. This is the start of a new church year, as well as the start of a new chapter for us together. In the coming weeks we will be hearing again the story of the angel's message to Mary – inviting her to be part of something extraordinary – the story of God coming amongst us as a tiny child, and we will be celebrating with services as well as our Christmas bazaar and many Christmas-themed events and activities.

I hope to meet many of you there and to get to know you better, and I hope you will feel free to say hello if you spot me or to get in touch if you would like to find a time to talk. A time of new beginnings is a great time for building new relationships and looking for what the future might bring – what an appropriate season for this moment in our parish.

I wonder what this season of new beginnings means for you: what new adventures God might be calling you into? And whilst we're wondering, what new adventures God might be calling us into as a church? These will be the questions in my prayers these coming weeks.

So in the spirit of thankfulness and hope for what may come, I wish you a blessed Advent and – when it comes – a very happy Christmas.

Revd Emily Hockliffe Essex

Cover Photo - **Revd Nick Fielden.**

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Sunday Services

The church is open for private prayer, and to exchange books and jigsaws between **9.00am and 4.00pm daily** except when there is a service.

8:00am Communion in Church (Book of Common Prayer)

9:45am Parish Communion in Church

6:00pm Occasional services in Church

As advertised on our website and Facebook page

Churchwardens' Corner, November 2025

After weeks of planning and preparation the big day arrived - 12th November - the Institution, Induction and Installation of the Rev'd Emily Hockliffe Essex, our new vicar. We were delighted how well the service went - full of warmth and joy - and we were pleased that so many people, both from Bodicote and her sending church (Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry), were in attendance to give her the welcome that she so richly deserves. We are very much looking forward to working with Emily and exploring ways in which our parish can develop and grow.

During the service it was good that Bishop Gavin publicly named every member of the clergy who had supported us during the vacancy. As has been mentioned in every edition of Churchwardens' Corner, their support has been absolutely invaluable.

The reception after the service was well attended and the PCC manfully served drinks and food and washed up and tidied away afterwards. Grateful thanks to them and other volunteers who helped during and before the service.

Prior to the 12th November, a successful concert performed by the Banbury Strings was held on the 4th October. Our Harvest Festival service was held on the 5th October. Many items were donated which were sent to one of the Banbury Food Banks. Michael and Jodie's wedding on the 10th October was a joyful occasion, led by the Rev'd Alicia Baker, our Area Dean.

The All Souls' Service on the 2nd November was a poignant occasion with many candles being lit in memory of loved ones. Likewise, the Remembrance Day Service on the afternoon of the 9th November was a chance to reflect and give thanks for the sacrifices of all those who fought in the World Wars and the conflicts between then and now. It was pleasing that many of the village youth organisations were in attendance. This service was led by the Rev'd Graeme Arthur, who also led the service of reflection at the war memorial at 11.00 am on Tuesday, 11th November. On this day we were joined by pupils from Bishop Loveday School. We have a Commonwealth War Grave in our churchyard and after the service a posy was placed on this grave following the recitation of the poem 'In Flanders' Fields' written by John McCrae in 1915 and read by Wing Commander Graham Wyeth, who organised both services.

As you can see, we have been busy . . . and now we are gearing up for Christmas! Please look out for posters and newsletters with all the important dates.

Lynne Philpot and Rob Kirk, Churchwardens

St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Bodicote

New Year bingo dates



Saturdays at 2pm in Church House

31st January

28th February

28th March

£6 for a book of 5 games, tea and biscuits.

Prizes for first lines and full houses.

Raffle.

Raising funds for our church.

All welcome!

Mothers' Union, Bodicote Branch *Join us and join in!*



The Committee and Members warmly welcome the Revd Emily Hockliffe Essex, newly appointed Vicar of our Church and Community and we look forward to her involvement with our Branch and the Mothers' Union.

Our meeting in October started with a lovely service in Church, taken by Revd Hazel Scarr, celebrating Harvest and giving thanks for all that God provides. This was followed by a very tasty 'Bring and Share' Harvest Supper in Church House.

The Diocesan Autumn meeting and AGM on 8th October was in Benson and 3 of our members attended.

Our meeting in November was at 2.30pm (all future meetings will be held at this time until the Spring). It was our annual meeting when we write Christmas Cards for prisoners. It was a very effective and efficient process! Some members were writing the required message in each card; others were checking that the cards all had the correct message inside and another group were collecting the completed cards and putting them into piles of 50. In all it was thought that 1,000 cards were written and sorted! Surprisingly it was a very social activity that involved all members at the meeting.

We end the year with our Christmas Social on December 10th. This year we are not having a Bring and Share but the committee is arranging the food. Members are asked to bring £5 each to cover the cost of the food and includes a donation to the MU Diocesan Charity AFIA (Away From It All). This money provides family days out or holidays for families that do not have the chance to 'get away from it all' and spend some vital family time together.

We start 2026 with our AGM and Meeting on January 14th at 2.30pm in Church House. Hopefully by then we will have the Programme ready for next year's Meetings and Events.

We wish all our members, their families and friends a very Happy Christmas and Joyful New Year!

Join us and join in!

All are welcome to come to any of our meetings or services. If you would like any further information about our Branch or the Mothers' Union then please contact either Lynne Philpot on 01295 256982 or Claire Roberts on 01295 254597.

Bishop Loveday School News

We had a busy first term and in true Bishop Loveday style started our second term with a bang as our year 6 children left to go on residential to Swanage on the second day of the new term. The children had a great time, with activities like climbing, archery and axe throwing to name a few. A huge thank you to the staff who volunteered their own time to take the children, it is such an important part of a child's primary school experience and would just not be possible without the goodwill of staff giving up their own time from their own families.

In Sport, our cross-country runners attended the Banbury Schools Cross Country Running event where three of our teams and a few single runners got through to the next round. The school finished 2nd overall out of 17 primary schools, and we were so proud of the sheer determination of every single participant. We also sent some of our children to a Tag Rugby tournament as well 50 children attending the boys and girls football tournaments.

We attended Reverend Emily's induction in November and we're very much looking forward to welcoming her into our community and school. We think she is going to be such a brilliant asset to our school.

By the time this reaches homes, we will have completed an information evening and come and play sessions for new starters in September 2026. If you have missed these but you are still interested in Bishop Loveday, please do email Steph Roberts in the office for a one-to-one tour with myself - admin.3351@bishop-loveday.oxon.sch.uk

From everybody at Bishop Loveday, we wish you all a safe and happy Christmas.

Dee Loader, Head of School

Trustee Vacancies on Bodicote Welfare Fund

(Charity which administers the upkeep of the village hall, playing field and play area)

An Extraordinary General Meeting was held on Wednesday 22nd October 2025 noting the retirement of several trustees after many years of service.

The land was left to the village in 1946 and the charity was formed. For the charity to survive and continue its work, it requires new trustees and members who live in Bodicote. The roles of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary are still vacant. We are offering a shadowing opportunity over the next few months, for individuals interested in gaining insight into these positions. This is an excellent chance to learn more about our work, understand the responsibilities involved, and experience the impact of our charity first hand.

If you are interested or require further information please email bodicotevhc@btinternet.com. Thank you.



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We can help with Benefit advice, benefit forms, general advice, education course information and Career Advice. We are able to arrange Home Visits to fill in disability forms with DWP Visiting Team. We do not give debt advice but can issue Foodbank vouchers.

Our advice points are across Banbury. We help people living in Oxfordshire, South Northants and South Warwickshire and Buckinghamshire. The service is run by volunteers. Please feel free to make a donation to support the charity.

We are closed on Fridays and weekends. Appointments take place between 10.30am to 2pm.

Need advice on Power of Attorney and Wills?

We can arrange free initial advice.

Main Phone line 01295 279988 and leave a message.

We work by appointments only

Email is the quickest way to get a response. Email helpdeskbanpc@yahoo.com

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Cherwell Business Village, Units F10-F11, Southam Road, Banbury, OX16 2SP
TEL: 01295 279988 and leave a message.

Phoenix Office

49C Castle Street, Banbury, OX16 5NU
TEL: 01295 257974 (only staffed on appointment days)

Website:

www.banburyshirecitizenproject.org.uk

St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Bodicote

Christmas Bazaar

Saturday 6th December

2—3.30pm

All the usual stalls, tombola,
refreshments and raffle



Free admission—all welcome.

Do come along and bring your friends.

St. John the Baptist Parish Church, Bodicote

Family Christmas Crafts Afternoon

on

Saturday 13th December

2—3.30pm

in Bodicote Church House

Come along and join us for a relaxed
and fun afternoon trying various crafts

Free event, but any donations towards
costs welcomed!

All children must be accompanied by a
responsible adult

Afternoon Teas

Bodicote Church House
(adjacent to the church)

All welcome

2:30pm - 3:30pm

**The 1st, 3rd & 5th
Wednesday of each month.**

**Fun Table Quiz. Donations
towards the cost.**



Save the date!

We have an afternoon quiz booked for Saturday 21st February 2026 starting at 2pm. Tea and cakes will be served. Teams of up to 6 people. The cost is £8 per head with a discount for a team of 6 booked beforehand: £40 instead of £48.

Bookings will start in the new year via office.
bodicotechurch@gmail.com or 07840 646651

Book early to avoid disappointment.




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Want to stay in touch?

Check out service times, events and other information.

Facebook

Why not 'like' our Facebook page?

www.facebook.com/BodicoteParishChurch

We keep this updated with news of services and what we are doing, as well as daily posts of prayers and perhaps a 'thought for the day,' relevant painting or sculpture, piece of music, words of a hymn and so on.

For those of you particularly interested in our fundraising and charitable giving, we have a dedicated Bodicote Church Fundraising group which you are welcome to join:

www.facebook.com/groups/255936438824026



Website

More detailed information about the church, its people, history, services and events, as well as links to the weekly newsletters can be found on our website:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5406/

Useful Contacts:

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