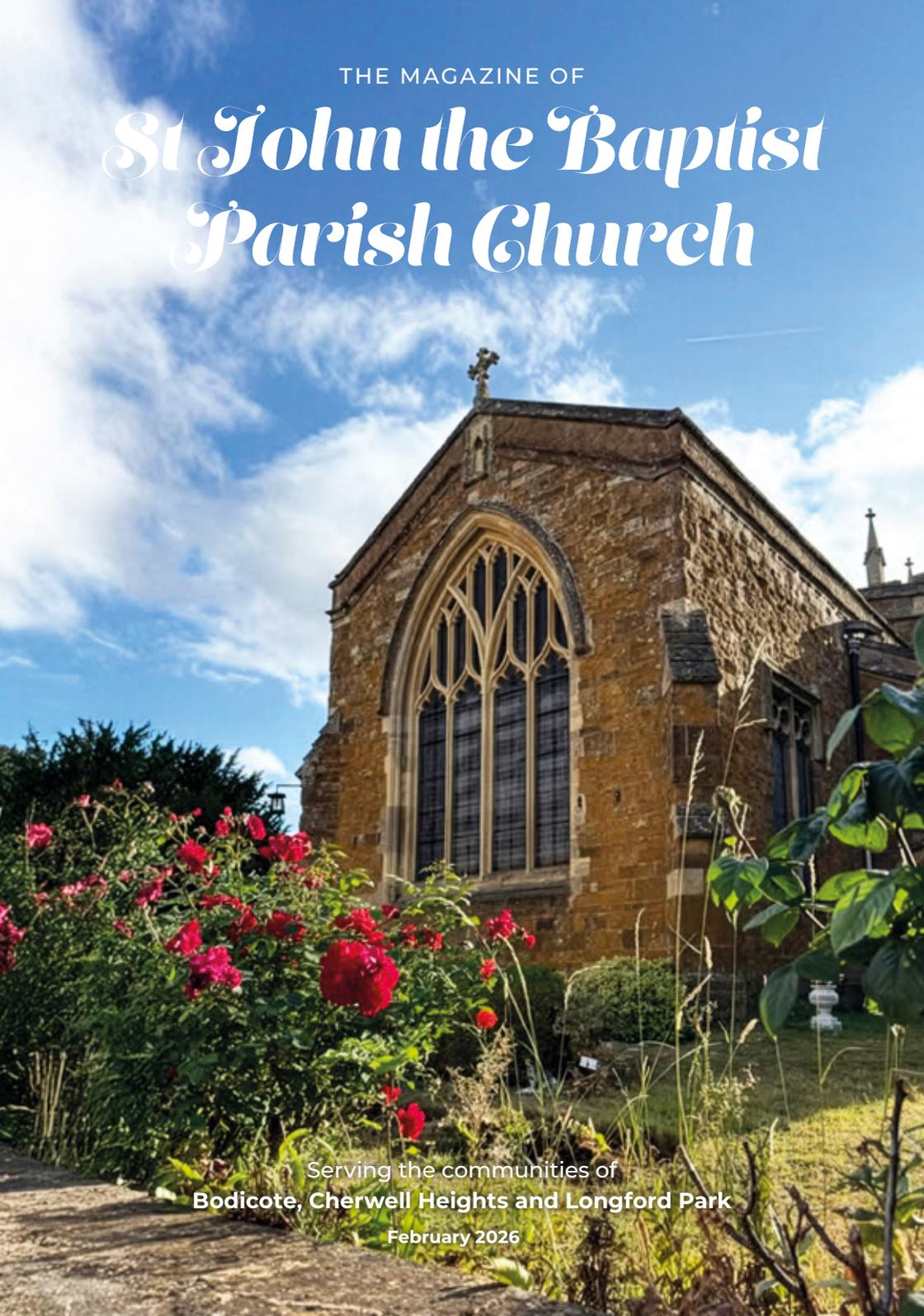


THE MAGAZINE OF

St John the Baptist Parish Church



Serving the communities of
Bodicote, Cherwell Heights and Longford Park

February 2026

Vicars Report



Dear friends,

It has been a great joy to celebrate with you all the coming of Christ among us and the light that shines in our hearts. As we turn towards Lent and Easter, I invite you to continue journeying with us, through our services, special events, and in prayer.

This year we will be running a Lent course on Monday evenings – all the details can be found on page six. This will be a space to explore ideas around prayer, and to learn about different ways we can pray. No expertise is required, but any and all wisdom is welcome. It will be a space to share as well as to learn. Alongside this we will have a number of special services to capture key moments in the story of Jesus' life, his death, and his resurrection.

More widely in the life of St John's, we are focussing on building up the intergenerational relationships in our community, and thinking about how we can serve people of all ages. One new initiative is to find out what we can offer in a weekly slot for pre-school children. Perhaps this could be an informal service, or 'forest church'? We want to tailor this to the people who might use it, and we invite you to share your thoughts through this short online survey – just go to <https://forms.gle/zRN87Dbh1gp1cGY98> or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page.

More generally, I am always available to talk, and to hear your ideas, and you can contact me at revd.emily@gmail.com or on **07979 931889**.

As we enter into this new season, I pray that you will find ways to make space to nurture your relationship with God, and allow God to nurture you. May we be pilgrims on the journey of life, following in Jesus' footsteps, and looking forward to the glory of Easter.

With every blessing for a holy Lent, and an Eastertide filled with joy and hope.

Revd Emily



Scan the QR code to complete our short online survey

Cover Photo - **Jenifer Buchanan West** (who visited Bodicote from America recently)

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Apologies for a later than usual magazine

You may have realised that this magazine has come through your door a little later than usual this month. This was a deliberate decision in order to give us more time to prepare it, as we have made the decision, for various reasons, to move to quarterly editions in future.

This particular magazine covers our services and events for February, March and April, including our Lent and Easter special activities. We would love to welcome you to any of these.

The May magazine will be back to the usual delivery time, and you can expect to receive it towards the end of April.

We hope you enjoy reading this magazine!

Bodicote Church House

Family crafts afternoon for Easter

Saturday 21st March
2 - 3.30pm

No charge, but any donations towards the costs are much appreciated.

All children MUST be accompanied by a responsible adult.

We suggest you bring a bag or box to take your creations home in!

We look forward to seeing you.



10th -16th May 2026

Christian Aid Week

Dear Parishioners, we're so grateful for your support in Christian Aid week. Your donations change lives and demonstrate the power of faith in action.

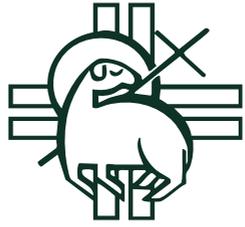
Because of your generosity, **children in Gaza have safe places to play and learn again.** In Bangladesh, **families are rebuilding their lives through small loans.** In Guatemala, **your support helps farmers share climate-smart techniques.** And when disasters strike, your gifts help us reach people fast.

Your kindness continues to be the light that guides us. Christian Aid's work has always been powered by faith – a shared belief that every family deserves to live in hope and dignity. Whether you give, act or pray, you are part of a movement changing lives for good and helping to end the injustice of extreme poverty.

What is Christian Aid Week?

Every May, churches, and individuals across the UK, Republic of Ireland and the world host a huge range of fundraising events, making Christian Aid Week one of the biggest acts of Christian witness in the British Isles. This year 10th -16th May, we shall have envelopes in church for donations.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE HELPED MORE THAN 4 MILLION PEOPLE DIRECTLY AND 12 MILLION MORE INDIRECTLY ACROSS 28 COUNTRIES.



The Parish Church of
St John the Baptist
 serving the communities of Bodicote,
 Cherwell Heights and Longford Park

Lent Course: exploring the landscape of prayer

All are welcome to join us on Mondays at Dillon House
 7-8pm with refreshments from 6.45pm

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Monday 23 February | Praying in words |
| Monday 2 March | Praying in silence |
| Monday 9 March | Praying the rhythms of life |
| <i>Monday 16 March</i> | <i>no meeting this week</i> |
| Monday 23 March | Praying the Bible |
| Monday 30 March | Praying the liturgy |

Join us as we journey together through the landscape of prayer, whether as an expert in the field or new and intrigued. This will be an opportunity to share experiences, and to explore how we can deepen our relationship with God through different forms of prayer.

To register your interest, or for more information, contact:
revd.emily@gmail.com

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



Just a reminder!

Banbury Foodbank

We do have a collection box for items for the foodbank in church for those of you unable to use the donation points elsewhere.

According to their website (<https://banbury.foodbank.org.uk/>) they currently need long-life juice and milk and tinned fruit, soup and vegetables. This list is regularly updated, so worth checking if it has changed.

You do need a referral voucher to access the foodbank so, if you need help yourselves, please check their website for details of where you can get a voucher, foodbank locations and opening hours.

Join us for an afternoon of

BINGO

in Bodicote Church House on Saturdays:

**28th February,
& 28th March**

For a fun, family afternoon. Eyes down at 2pm

£6 for a book of 5 games, to include tea and biscuits. Cake charged as an optional extra!

Raffle, £1 a ticket.

Prizes for first line and full house.

*All welcome
Help us raise funds
for our church*

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

COMMUNITY

FETE

BODICOTE CHURCH

**SATURDAY,
16TH MAY**

**1PM UNTIL
4PM**

FREE
ENTRY

**CHILDREN'S TREASURE HUNT - RAFFLE
TOMBOLAS - REFRESHMENTS - FOOD - GAMES
BODICOTE ARCHIVE GROUP DISPLAY**

**SEE PAGE 14 FOR DETAILS
ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED!**

OFFICE.BODICOTECHURCH@GMAIL.COM

Join us and join in!



MOTHERS' UNION, BODICOTE BRANCH

A New Year, A New Magazine, and A New Programme of events and meetings planned for our Branch! A great start to 2026!

We had ended 2025 with our Christmas Social. This was a successful event but different from previous years in that we enjoyed an Afternoon Tea with a Christmas theme and raffle, but it was made a fundraiser by charging members for tickets. This enabled the Branch to make a donation to the Diocesan Charity AFIA (Away From It All).

We started the New Year in January with our AGM - looking back at last year's events and activities and looking forward to what has been planned by the Committee for this year. There are currently 24 members in our Branch, including the 5 members who are on the Committee. The Committee members all agreed to stay on for another year. But sadly, we lost one of our members, Pam Hobday who died in September, she had been a faithful member for 17 years.

There is a lot planned for 2026 – some new initiatives, some of our usual events and meetings and also this year the Mother's Union celebrates its 150th birthday! There will be various worldwide, national and local events over the summer to celebrate and mark the founding of the Mother's Union by Mary Sumner in 1876. More information about local events will be in the next Magazine.

The events and meetings for the next 3 months are:

February 11th – at our meeting at 2.30pm in Church House the 'Town House Wellbeing Clinic' will be giving us a very useful talk titled 'The Art of Ageing Well'.

February 18th - is the Ash Wednesday Service in Church at 7.00pm.

March 6th - Is the World Day of Prayer at 7.00pm in Church. The service this year has been prepared by the Christian women of Nigeria and the theme is 'I will give you rest, come!'.

March 11th - is our meeting in Church House at 2.30pm and the speaker will be Rev'd Emily Hockliffe Essex. It will be lovely to welcome Emily to one of our meetings.

March 15th – Mothering Sunday in Church at 9.45am.

April 8th – this would have been our usual meeting date, but we will be meeting instead on April 22nd.

April 21st – is the Diocesan Spring Meeting and Wave of Prayer at 1.00pm at Reading Minster.

April 22nd – Wave of Prayer and Branch meeting at 2.30pm in Church House

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 fabulous end to our Christmas term with Nativities performed in Early Years, Year 1 and Year 2. Our children did brilliantly, and we were so proud of them. Our Year 4s then participated (again with their parents and carers) in a craft activity, making lanterns for the community parade in town. We had an amazing turn out of families and it was such a lovely event coming together as a larger community. The children and staff worked so hard to pull all of these events together and it was such a wonderful end to the term.

Our Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) provision continues to go from strength to strength and our children have particularly enjoyed the addition of our giant sand pit. By the time this goes to print, our new amphitheatre will have been built so that our children have a zone to dress up, dance and put on shows.

Our choir have had a very busy season with children singing for children in November, a Carols by Candlelight service during the last week of term and then last week they attended Young Voices in Birmingham with 6000 other children. In March, they have been asked to sing with Oxford Opera in the Sheldonian, which has been very different to anything they have tried before.

After our Cross Country was rained off, our children are looking forward to competing in the next round at Sibford School at the end of this term. We have also attended Athletics events and multiskills in year 1. We are looking forward to the many events coming up this term.

Dee Loader, Head of School

FOUNDATION GOVERNOR FOR BISHOP LOVEDAY SCHOOL REQUIRED.

*Make a difference. Shape the future.
Serve your community.*

We are seeking a committed and enthusiastic Foundation Governor to join our governing body and help guide the strategic direction of our school.

As a Foundation Governor, you will play a vital role in:

- Upholding the school's Christian vision and values.
- Supporting and challenging school leaders to achieve the best for every child.
- Ensuring the school remains a caring, inclusive and high-achieving community.

You don't need to be an education expert, just someone with:

- A passion for children and learning.
- The ability to listen, ask questions and work as part of a team.
- A commitment to the school's ethos and community.
- Time commitment: Around 6 meetings per year, plus school visits and training.

If you would like to use your skills to serve your community and help shape the future of our school, we would love to hear from you. Please email office. bodicotechurch@gmail.com for more information.

Member of
advice UK BANBURYSHIRE ADVICE CENTRE

Need Advice?

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 helpdeskbanccp@yahoo.com

Banburyshire Advice Centre

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

We're a registered charity in England (no. 1170519)

Community Fete

Saturday 16th May
times t.b.c

After a very successful community fete and treasure hunt last year, we are repeating it this year! Please make a note of the date in your diaries!

At this point, we are inviting local community groups and charities who might like to be involved this year to get in touch. You can either use it as an opportunity to promote your organisation or raise funds or a mixture of both.

Ideally it would be good not to have too much overlap of similar stalls, so please let us know what you would like to do when you make contact. Choice of stalls will be on a "first come, first served" basis. There will be no charge for stalls, and you can keep any money you raise, but if you did wish to donate a raffle prize it would be much appreciated.

The church plans to have another treasure hunt and is working on a slightly different form for this

year. Several members of the congregation commented how lovely it was to see so many families in the church building last year. And we were still finding the pebbles a few weeks later!

Unfortunately, due to space constraints, particularly if we have bad weather on the day, we can only accept applications from local community groups and charities and not businesses.

Please get in touch by emailing office.bodicotechurch@gmail.com or **07840 646651**. Please note neither of these are monitored 24/7 but I will get back to you as soon as we can.

Ann Sansom
Parish Administrator



St John the Baptist

Bring & Buy & Spring Fayre

Saturday 14th March
11am—12.30pm

Bodicote Church House

Refreshments

Hot cross buns

Gifts

Cakes

Games

Raffle

All welcome

NO BRIC-A-BRAC PLEASE

Afternoon Teas

2:30pm - 3:30pm

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

Bodicote Church House

(adjacent to the church)



Fun Table Quiz. Donations towards the cost. All welcome

Sunday Club

Sunday Club continues on the last Sunday of each month until the end of June when we will take a short summer break for July and August.

In January we heard about Jesus's baptism in the River Jordan and talked about baptisms in our church. We made baptism candles.

In February we will look at the story of Jonah and the whale. Our March session falls on Palm Sunday, so this will be our theme.

We start in church, leaving during the first hymn of our 9.45am service to go over to Church House for a Bible story and related crafts and activities, leaving parents to be able to focus on the service without their usual distractions! We will bring the children back to church in time to join their families for Holy Communion. The children enjoy telling the rest of the congregation what we have been doing and showing them what they have made.

All primary aged children are welcome to join us but please note, this is not a "drop off" - parents/ grandparents/carers are expected to be in the service or with us in Church House for the duration. Younger children are welcome with a parent.

We are quite a small group at present and would warmly welcome some new members.


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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:

Vicar - Emily Hockliffe Essex
revd.emily@gmail.com 07979 931889

Church Wardens
churchwardens.bodicotechurch@gmail.com

Parish Administrator (for general enquiries)
office.bodicotechurch@gmail.com

Treasurer
treasurer.bodicotechurch@gmail.com

Church Mobile Phone
07840 646651

Church House Hire - Nicholas Hart
01295 253747
ncahart@hotmail.co.uk

Baptism Bookings - Claire Roberts
claireroberts500@gmail.com

Weddings and Funerals
revd.emily@gmail.com

Magazine Advertising
treasurer.bodicotechurch@gmail.com



Want to make a donation?

If you would like to donate, you can do so by using your Smartphone, scanning the QR code (to the left) or typing in the link: <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/bodicote-st-john-banbury/>



Domestic & Commercial

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danielgardner2005@gmail.com





St John the Baptist

Services for Lent, Holy Week, & Easter

Wednesday 18th February

Ash Wednesday
Holy Communion with ashing
10am and 7pm

Sunday 8th March

Service of music and readings for
Lent
6pm

Sunday 15th March

Mothering Sunday
All-Age Parish Communion
9.45am

29th March

Palm Sunday
Parish Communion with Procession
of Palms
9.45am

Tuesday 31st March

Stations of the Cross
6pm

Wednesday 1st April

Holy Week Compline
8pm

Thursday 2nd April

Maundy Thursday
Liturgy of Maundy Thursday with
foot washing and Watch
7.30pm

Friday 3rd April

Good Friday
Liturgy of the Cross
2pm

Saturday 4th April

Easter Eve
Easter Vigil
8pm

Sunday 5th April

Easter Day
8am Holy Communion
9.45am All-Age Parish Communion

All welcome

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5406/>