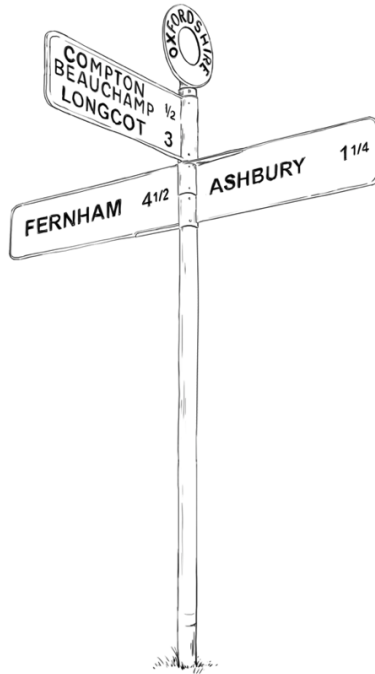


**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM
NEWS
DECEMBER 2020**



**Stations of the Nativity- “at home”-
Friday 18th December 6pm**

See inside for details

Thought for the month

We come out of “Lockdown II” at the beginning of the Church season of Advent. The word Advent means, according to the dictionary, “The arrival of a notable person or thing”. For Christians around the world Advent is the season of waiting for the arrival of Jesus. It is a period of hopeful expectation. We look forward to the celebration of Christmas, the feast of Jesus’ birth. We are also reminded in the Bible readings in church at this time of the hopeful expectation of the fulfilment of God’s loving purposes in the renewal of all things in their ultimate destiny at the end of time.

Many around the world are waiting now in hopeful expectation for a vaccine for Covid 19. This corona virus has been so destructive. The economies of nations across the globe have been shattered. More devastating has been the impact on our everyday lives. Many have been separated from their loved ones. Grandparents have not been able to hug and kiss their grandchildren, for example. During lockdown times many have been isolated, alone, and anxious.

We still do not know how “normal” this Christmas might be. Perhaps we will have to meet in smaller groupings than usual. Perhaps we will be unable to sing familiar, comforting, and joyful Christmas carols. Here in Ashbury, the much-loved Stations of the Nativity cannot happen in the usual manner. Hopefully, we might be able to have an on-line version as so many other events have happened during this passing year. But one thing at least about Christmas remains certain. We will be celebrating the birth of the one who brings light to shine in the darkness; who feels for our sadness and shares in our gladness; one whose birth is “Good News of Great Joy for All People”.

I hope and pray that you have an expectant and hopeful Advent and a joyful Christmas.

Paul [Revd Canon Paul Richardson - Associate Vicar, Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice]

Views expressed in “Thought for the month” are those of the contributors

Ashbury News

Update on Operation Christmas Child Thank you to everyone who has already left shoeboxes at St Mary’s Church or on my doorstep. There is still time to pack a shoebox and bring it up to the church or give it to me. Covid restrictions allowing I will be taking all the boxes to Highworth on Thursday 10th December so please make sure you get your box to me by Wednesday 9th December. **Maggie Simons**

W&S Scout Christmas Post 2020 – Shrivenham area only

Christmas will be upon us before we know it, and Watchfield & Shrivenham Scouts are again running a Christmas card delivery service. However, due to the current Covid 19 situation, we are not teaming up with the Scouts in Swindon, **so it will only cover our local area of Shrivenham, Watchfield, Bourton, Ashbury, Longcot and Fernham**

As I write, we hope lockdown will be lifted on 2nd December. If it is not, the Florists may not be open, but please use the other venues in Watchfield and Ashbury.

IV Florists, High Street, Shrivenham (open 9 – 5.30 Mon – Sat) Lyall and Co café in High Street, Watchfield (open 9 – 3 Mon – Sat) The Village shop, Ashbury (open 11 – 2 Tues – Sat)

They will have our “stamps” to sell at 30p each and are hosting our green posting boxes to accept cards and letters from Wednesday 25th November until Saturday 19th December. Post your letters and sit back while our army of socially distanced Scout volunteers do all the work of sorting and delivering for you before Christmas Eve.

Please do not put any post in these boxes destined for Swindon, as we are unable to deliver in those areas.

Church Matters

The information below was correct at time of going to print ... but please check the website for latest information and times www.shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk



“STATIONS OF THE NATIVITY – at Home”

Friday 18th December

Regrettably, in view of the present Covid situation we are not able to hold Ashbury Stations of the Nativity as we know it this year.

However, subject to final confirmation we will be recording a scaled down version which will be premiered on the Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice Facebook page on Friday 18th December at **6pm**.

You might consider getting your mulled wine and mince pies ready to watch the video together.

Hopefully next year we will be able to revert to our traditional popular event.

DECEMBER SERVICES IN ASHBURY, COMPTON, LONGCOT & FERNHAM WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

Sunday 6 December

9am	Holy Communion (BCP) Compton	
9.30am	Morning Prayer	Longcot
10am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

Thursday 10 December

10am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
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Sunday 13 December

9.30am	Morning Prayer	Ashbury
10am	Holy Communion	Longcot

Saturday 19 December

5pm	The Christmas Story with Music and Readings Ashbury <i>Ticketed</i>	
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Sunday 20 December

9am	Matins (BCP)	Compton
10am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
3pm	A Celebration of Christmas	Fernham Green
6pm	The Christmas Story with Music and Readings Longcot <i>Ticketed</i>	

Thursday 24 December

4pm Crib service (outside porch) Ashbury

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Longcot ***Ticketed***

Friday 25 December

9am Holy Communion by extension

Compton ***Ticketed***

10am Family service with communion to follow

Ashbury ***Ticketed***

Sunday 27 December

10am Benefice Holy Communion

Watchfield ***Ticketed***

TICKETED EVENTS

As numbers must inevitably be limited in view of social distancing, attendance at these services will be by ticket. Where events on the schedule above are shown as "Ticketed" you can apply for tickets and will have reserved seats. Anyone arriving on the day without tickets will be found a seat if any are still available.

Tickets are free and will be available from 8th December on Eventbrite <http://shrivenham-and-ashbury-benefice.eventbrite.com/> or from the Benefice Administrator (shrivenham.ashbury.benefice@outlook.com)- 01793 783519 or in Ashbury contact Maggie Simons 01793 710801

Online services will continue to be streamed as follows:

Sundays	11am	Holy Communion
Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays	9am	Morning Prayer

Access to these services can be found by going onto Shrivenham & Ashbury Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/shrivenhamandashbury> (you do not need to be a Facebook member to go onto this page).

Our churches are open once a week for private prayer

Ashbury 10am – 4pm on Thursday

Compton Beauchamp 9am – 5pm on Sunday

Longcot 10am – 3pm on Wednesday

Face coverings are mandatory in churches

There is an exemption for those who are officiating at services and presiding at Holy Communion, and those who assist them (for instance by reading, preaching, or leading prayers) who do not always need to wear a face covering, although one should be worn if physical distancing cannot be maintained (such as at the distribution of Holy Communion).

In line with government advice, children under 11 and people with disabilities or certain health conditions are also exempt from wearing face coverings.

Please do not come into church if you think you may have symptoms of Covid 19.

We do understand that not everyone will feel ready to come back into church just yet, so if it doesn't feel right, please take your time, knowing that we will be delighted to welcome you back when you are ready.

Ashbury Prayer cycle for December: 6th Berrycroft Lane, 13th Chapel Lane, 20th Church Lane, 27th College Farm Lane

Rev'd Norma Fergusson (Vicar)	01793 784338
Canon Paul Richardson (Associate Vicar)	01793 710241
Maggie Simons, Ashbury churchwarden	01793 710801
Dennis Blease, Longcot churchwarden	01793 780708
Joanna Lambert, Compton churchwarden	07990 898175

LONGCOT CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER – CHAPEL NEWS

So we've ended up in another Lockdown. We do hope that it isn't proving too much of a trial and that everyone is keeping well. It may be possible to open the chapel for short periods in December but with the restrictions we're now used to. Please keep a lookout for any notices at the chapel. It would be lovely to see everyone before Christmas but if that's not possible we wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas. If we remember the real reason for celebrating, then Christmas is very definitely NOT cancelled!!

Stella

Ambassadors Bible Church (at AEFC) While the current situation is so fluid please look at our website www.ambiblechurch.co.uk

Country Matters

Just now it's mild after a very wet October which has prevented much of the winter corn planting on heavy land for the second year in succession. Daffodils and crocuses are already peeping through and there is a definite dawn chorus to greet the morn so birds may think it's spring! But steady on, let us get back to autumn, the season of mellow fruitfulness.

Our hedgerows and gardens have been almost groaning with the weight of berries and fruit. Our ancient garden perry pear has dropped nearly a ton of fruit which will provide breakfast fruit juices for guests at the Royal Oak, Bishopstone. Unharvested apples and crabs on the floor can almost be a hazard to walkers. We have two ornamental crabs in our garden (*malus prunifolia splendens*) which are a splendid rich red sight.

Of the other red berries in the woods and hedges I find it rewarding to be able to cut holly for Christmas from my own farm plantings. My neighbours and I have also planted many spindleberries (another favourite) which are now at their best. We are assisting that natural process which is said to generate a new species every 100 years in a 25 metre hedge run. Whitebeam, rowan and guelder rose are also red berried.

Then there are the clusters of hawthorn haws and rose hips. When the wild rose loses its leaves, the hips attached to the bare twigs can give a rather interesting orange-red naked structure. In gardens more red berries are showing brightly on cotoneaster and pyracantha. In the spring, yews can produce their conical red fruits known as arils, which are not poisonous, unlike the leaves of yew which are very poisonous to farm animals but interestingly not so to the wild fallow deer in Ashdown Park, which seem to be resistant. Birds harvest these arils, especially mistle thrushes, and this year with all the berries the redwings and fieldfares will have a field-day over the coming winter days!

Down in the New Forest and because of the abundance, they are extending this year the commoners' rights to graze domestic pigs on the fallen oak apples and hazel nuts called pannage, a practice in place there since 1079 under William the Conqueror.

We are hopefully looking forward to more cheerful times at Christmas after these dreary lockdowns and it is easy to find sloes which are numerous either in the vale or on the downs to make the winter tippie. With winter warming you can briefly put them in the freezer rather than wait for a good frost. Sloes are the fruits from blackthorn, which when flowering white like snow in April can give rise to the term of a "blackthorn winter".

Richard Green

Contacts

Ashbury Parish Council

Chairman Cliff Davies 01793 710712 chairman@ashbury.org.uk

Clerk to the council: Laura Evans email clerk@ashbury.org.uk

Defibrillator: On the wall by the School entrance

St Mary's Ashbury Parochial Church Council

Associate vicar: Paul Richardson 01793 710241

Church wardens: Maggie Simons 01793 710801 Richard Green 01793 791310

Secretary: Roger Simons 01793 710801 rogersimons1@outlook.com

Vicar (Shrivenham) Revd Norma Fergusson 01793 784338

rev.n.fergusson@btinternet.com (not Monday)

Ashbury Village Hall

Maggie Simons 0193 710801 maggiemsimons@outlook.com

Secretary Margaret Smith 01793 710800 mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk

Bookings: Lin and Kevin Clarke 01793 710326

Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp CE(A) Primary School and little Berries Preschool

Headteacher Rachael Smith 01793 710259 www. <http://www.ashburyprimary.org.uk>
office.3851@ashbury.oxon.sch.uk

Ashbury Village Shop 01793 710068

G.P. Surgeries Shrivenham 01793 782207 Lambourn 01488 71715/72299

Post Office at the Rose & Crown Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30-11.30am

Vale of the White Horse District Council 01235 422422

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Recycling/Rubbish collection queries admin.vale@biffa.co.uk

Food waste is collected weekly, green/black bins alternate each week. Garden waste brown bins fortnightly. Mondays except Bank holidays.

Your Local District Councillors are: Elaine Ware 01973 783026

elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and Simon Howell 01793 784491

simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Yvonne Constance: 01235 751475/07976934884

yvonne.constance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M.P. for the Wantage constituency: David Johnston david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk
0207 219 3000

Newsletter entries for January 2021. Submit your entries for January by **16th December** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionlturner@me.com 01793 710302 For more of "what's on" and local information see the Ashbury Village Website www.ashbury.org.uk and the community page on Facebook.