



# The Shrevenham and Ashbury Benefice

“Mirroring the hospitality of God”

Sunday 15th November Second Sunday before Advent

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Licensed Lay Minister: Mr Richard Fergusson. Tel 07788 436831



## Sunday 15th November

11.00am Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

Rev'd Norma Fergusson is giving this week's sermon.  
Watch on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).  
Available from 9am on Sunday 15th November.

## Tuesday

9:00am Morning Prayer. Live on [Facebook](#).

## Wednesday

9:00am Morning Prayer. Live on [Facebook](#).  
10:30am Bible Study Course. Live via Zoom.  
7:00pm Longcot & Fernham APCM via Zoom.

## Thursday

9:00am Matins (BCP). Live on [Facebook](#).

## Friday

5:30pm Worship and Praise. Live via Zoom.  
Contact David Ahern for details of how to take part.  
01793 783521 [thestable@protonmail.com](mailto:thestable@protonmail.com)

## Sunday 22nd November

11.00am Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

All links, orders of services and readings  
are posted on the services page of our website  
[www.shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk](http://www.shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk)

## **Clergy Days Off**

Rev'd Fergusson's day off is Monday  
Canon Richardson's days off are Monday & Tuesday

## **Longcot & Fernham APCM**

Wednesday 18th November at 7pm via Zoom

### **There are vacancies on the PCC.**

If you would like to become a member of your PCC,  
please contact Richard Fergusson or Dennis Blease.  
Please contact Richard Fergusson if you would like the  
Zoom link to attend the meeting.

## **A Call to Prayer for the Nation**

Our Archbishops and leaders of other denominations  
have together called for a month of prayer for the  
nation during this second Lockdown.

*“We know that we are in the faithful hands of the risen  
Christ who knows our weaknesses, tiredness and  
struggles and whose steadfast love endures forever.”*

In response to this call, there will be a short time of  
prayer live on our Benefice Facebook page at  
6.00pm each evening. Please join us.

## **Are you a human doing or a human being?**

Earlier this week, Richard and I attended (by Zoom of course) the first part of a four-week course on contemplation. Not your ordinary wool gathering or staring into space but trying to understand and recapture for ourselves the meditative practices of the Christian fathers as a way of coming closer to God. Our teacher reminded us that not only is it OK to spend time in quiet contemplation, it's positively good for our mental and spiritual health.

If we are to obey the psalmist's instruction to “Be still and know that I am God” we first need to be still.

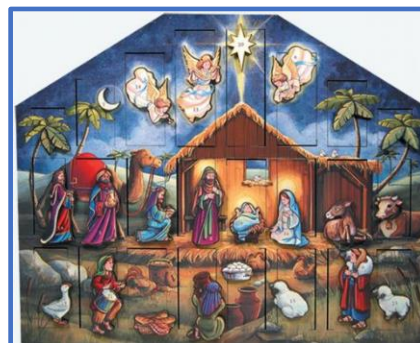
To be present in the present.

Thinking about it afterwards, I was reminded of a lecturer who began his talk with a confession that it had not been a good day. Lying in bed, he had been looking forward to breakfast; at breakfast he and colleagues were planning the morning; mid-morning he was looking forward to lunch; but at lunchtime ... You can see where this is going. Yes, he had done a lot during the day, but he had been so busy doing that he had forgotten to just to be. He hadn't taken the time to enjoy those last few minutes in bed, or the meals, or the company of others. He hadn't really been present in any of it. And he certainly hadn't been present to God. In a phrase echoed by our teacher this week, he had been a human doing, not a human being.

The picture of an Advent calendar on today's sheet is a timely reminder of the importance of taking the time to be still as wait for the coming of the Christ child. Such calendars help us to be intentional about marking the days rather than rushing through them, so that we will have come to know God and be ready to meet him when he comes.

Whatever else you are doing this week,  
I wish you the time to be still.

Norma



## **Advent Calendars & Christmas Cards for Sale**

Margaret Hern has a good selection of Christmas Christian charity cards and Advent calendars from

the Lighthouse Book Shop in Highworth. If you would like a socially distanced browse Margaret will put them out in her garage in Shrevenham.

Ring 01793 782100 to arrange a time to visit

## Update on Operation Christmas Child



Operation Christmas Child is still going ahead - it's too important not to. However, the drop off timings for boxes and items have been postponed for a month. If you have prepared a box or have some items you would like to donate please take them to St Mary's Church Ashbury and leave them in the porch or give Maggie Simons a ring on 01793 710801. You can also send a pre-packed shoebox by visiting the Samaritan's Purse website. [www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/)

## Ashbury Cycle of Prayer

Please pray this week for all who live and work in Walnut Trees Hill.

Please contact the clergy for pastoral issues, and a Churchwarden or the Benefice Administrator ([shrivenham.ashbury.benefice@outlook.com](mailto:shrivenham.ashbury.benefice@outlook.com)) for other church enquiries.

## Silent Auction

### Raising funds for St Mary's Church, Ashbury

This year instead of our Church Bazaar and Raffle we are holding a Silent Auction. We have forty-four lovely things up for auction; many of them will make nice Christmas presents. We hope you will find something of interest in the catalogue.

This is a Silent Auction so the amount of your bid will not be revealed, and you also have the option for your name not to be revealed. Information on how to bid is included in the catalogue. Paul Richardson has kindly offered to be filmed opening the sealed bids at 4 pm on Saturday 28 November and this will be available live for anyone to watch on the Benefice Facebook page.

Catalogues containing details of each 'lot' and bidding forms are available from

Margaret [mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk)

Judy [judithannclarke@outlook.com](mailto:judithannclarke@outlook.com)

## Churches Open for Private Prayer in Lockdown

During lockdown the churches will remain open for private prayer once a week as follows:

Ashbury 10am – 4pm on Thursday

Compton Beauchamp 9am – 5pm on Sunday

Longcot 10am – 3pm on Wednesday

Shrivenham 9am – 5pm on Sunday

Watchfield 10am – 4pm on Wednesday

Fernham church remains closed to allow Annabelle's pre-school exclusive access during term time.

**Face coverings are mandatory, and you should either scan the NHS test and trace QR code or use the sign-in sheets on entering. Hand sanitiser is available and remember to maintain social distancing.**

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

