



The Shrevenham and Ashbury Benefice

“Mirroring the hospitality of God”

Sunday 10th January Baptism of Christ



Vicar: The Rev'd Norma Fergusson. Tel 01793 784338
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Licensed Lay Minister: Mr Richard Fergusson. Tel 07788 436831

Service details were accurate at the time of publication. Please visit the Benefice website for up-to-date information.
www.shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk

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.

Sunday 10th January

9:30am Ashbury, St Mary
Morning Prayer
10:00am Shrevenham, St Andrew
Holy Communion. Also on [Facebook](#).
10:00am Watchfield, St Thomas
Holy Communion by Extension (BCP)

Canon Paul Richardson is giving today's sermon.
Watch on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#) from 9am.

Monday

10:30am Alpha Online Taster Session via Zoom.
Full details on page 2.

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

9:00am Morning Prayer. Live on [Facebook](#).
10:30am The Character Course via Zoom.
8:00pm The Character Course via Zoom.
Full details on page 2.

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

Sunday 17th January

9:00am Compton Beauchamp, St Swithun
Matins (BCP)
10:00am Bourton, St James
Holy Communion
10:00am Ashbury, St Mary
Holy Communion
11.30am Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

Ashbury Cycle of Prayer

Please pray this week for all who live and work in High Street.

Lockdown 3

I expect you know that, although we are once again in lockdown, attendance at church services is currently permitted provided that any person attending is either alone or “part of a group all from the same household or from two linked households and must not join any other group or mingle with any person from another group.”

In addition, travel to church is permitted but people are advised “to avoiding travelling outside of their village, town or the part of a city where they live.”

Nationally and locally, the advice to church leaders about conducting services is that we may do so if we believe it is safe both for those attending and those leading worship.

After much thought, prayer and discussion, the ministry team and churchwardens have agreed that a few of the churches in the Benefice will open for public worship each Sunday, but not for private prayer as the guidance on this is currently not clear.

The wardens will complete a new risk assessment before the weekend to ensure that each church is as safe as it can possibly be – not just for you but for those leading worship. Services will be shorter and the number of those involved kept to a minimum.

I know that, for many of you, attending church is an important part of your lives, which is why we will continue to offer services for as long as we are able. But please don't feel obliged to come just because the service is happening – we won't be offended! God is with us everywhere and can be worshipped anywhere. Any decision to attend church must be yours, taken prudently and prayerfully in the light of your own health and wellbeing, as well as those around you.

We will try and spread the services around the Benefice. Please be mindful of the advice to avoid travel and don't attend services other than in the church you normally attend. There will be plenty of time to worship in all our churches once the restrictions have been lifted. Meanwhile, our online services of Holy Communion and Morning Prayer will continue.

Finally, please remember that Paul and I are still here – to talk, to pray or just to listen.

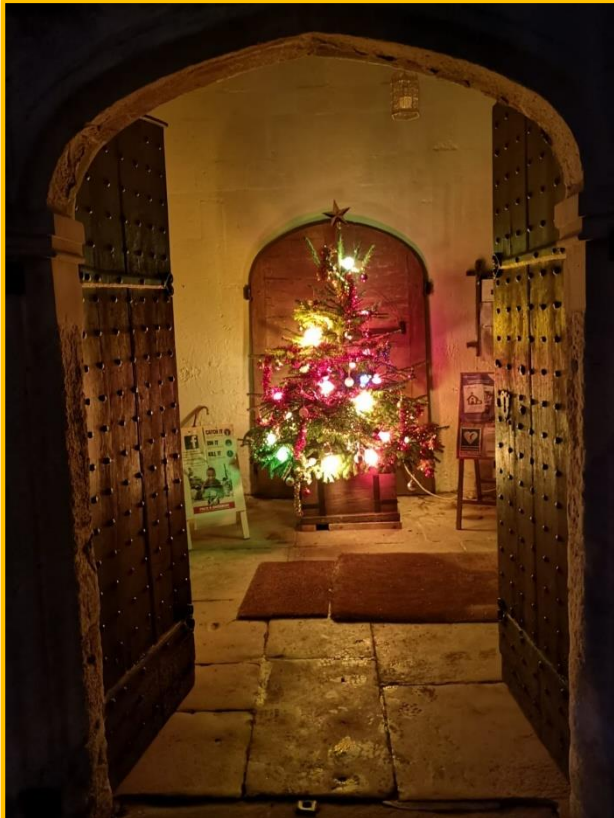
And to paraphrase Sir Thomas More: pray for us and we shall pray for you, and for all your friends, that we may merrily meet after lockdown.

Norma

Clergy Days Off

Rev'd Fergusson is off duty on Monday
Canon Richardson is off duty on Monday & Tuesday

A Message of Hope



The message of Christmas is one of hope, above all that 2000 odd years ago the light with which our universe began came into the world. It has been shining in the darkness ever since, and the darkness has not, will not, can not overcome it. Every time we light a candle, or hang up our Christmas lights, each one of them says to the darkness, which sometimes feels like it is about to overwhelm us, "I beg to differ". We may be in a new lockdown, but in the Vicarage, in the porch of St Andrew's church, and on the lamp posts up and down Shrivvenham High Street, the Christmas lights will stay lit as a message of hope for our community, that the darkness of the pandemic will not overcome us. And we invite you, if you like, to take down the cards and the decorations, but leave your own lights lit, and help to spread the message of hope.

Richard Fergusson

The Character Course

Each week, 'The Character Course' looks at one of eight themes: learning, hope, love, forgiveness, gratitude, humour, persistence and curiosity. The sessions last about 75 minutes. There is a short video to watch and a bible passage to ponder. The course is free and will run online via Zoom on Wednesdays from 13th January to 3rd March. Join a morning session at 10:30am or an evening session at 8:00pm.

Contact Jane Ahern to sign up for the course.
01793 783521 thestable@protonmail.com

Our condolences

to the family and friends of the late Mr Clifford Vaisey (formerly of Fernham), who died recently.

What is Alpha Online?

Alpha is a place to ask the big questions of life and explore the Christian faith together.

A chance to connect

Each session begins with a chance to meet and connect over video chat.

Watch a video together

The Alpha videos are designed to engage and inspire conversation. They're about thirty minutes long and explore the big issues around faith such as *Who is Jesus? How can we have faith? How does God guide us?*

Space to share your thoughts

After the video there is time to share thoughts and ideas on the topic and discuss it in a small group. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously!).

Interested?

Alpha Online will be held via Zoom on Monday mornings (10:30am - noon) from 11th January to 15th March. The first session is a taster to see if it is for you. Attending the course is completely free. Contact Jane Ahern to sign up for the course. 01793 783521 thestable@protonmail.com
A joint venture with Shrivvenham Methodist Church



Church Services by Telephone



Daily Hope offers music, prayers, and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England.

Dial 0800 804 8044 to hear a special greeting from the Archbishop, then choose from a range of options, including hymns, prayers, reflections, traditional morning and evening prayer and advice on COVID-19. Calls are free of charge.

Other Ways to Join in Worship

The Diocese 'Church at Home' service is online at 10am each Sunday.

If you want a break from the computer screen: Daily Service at 9:45am on BBC Radio 4 LW; Prayer for the Day at 5:43am and Sunday Worship at 8:10am on BBC Radio 4; Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3 on Wednesdays at 3:30pm and Sundays at 3:00pm; Songs of Praise at 1.15pm on Sundays on BBC 1.