

## Christmas services across the Benefice

### Sunday 1st December

5:30pm Advent Carols Shrivvenham, St Andrew

### Sunday 8th December

4:00pm Christingle Longcot, St Mary

### Sunday 15th December

3:00pm Carol Service Watchfield, St Thomas

5:45pm Christingle Shrivvenham, St Andrew  
followed by Carols around Shrivvenham Tree

6:00pm Carol Service Compton Beauchamp, St Swithun

### Thursday 19th December

3:15pm Messy Church Shrivvenham, St Andrew

5:00pm Village Carols Fernham, Elmside Green

### Friday 20th December

6:00pm Stations of the Nativity Ashbury Village Crossroads

### Saturday 21st December

5:00pm Carol Service Ashbury, St Mary

### Sunday 22nd December

4:00pm Carol Service Shrivvenham, St Andrew

6:30pm Carol Service Longcot, St Mary & Facebook

### Tuesday 24th December Christmas Eve

4:00pm Crib Service Ashbury, St Mary

4:00pm Crib Service Shrivvenham, St Andrew

3:30pm Village Carols Bourton, St James

5:00pm Holy Communion (BCP) Watchfield, St Thomas  
followed by Carols around Watchfield Tree

11:30pm Midnight Mass Longcot, St Mary

11:30pm Midnight Mass Shrivvenham, St Andrew

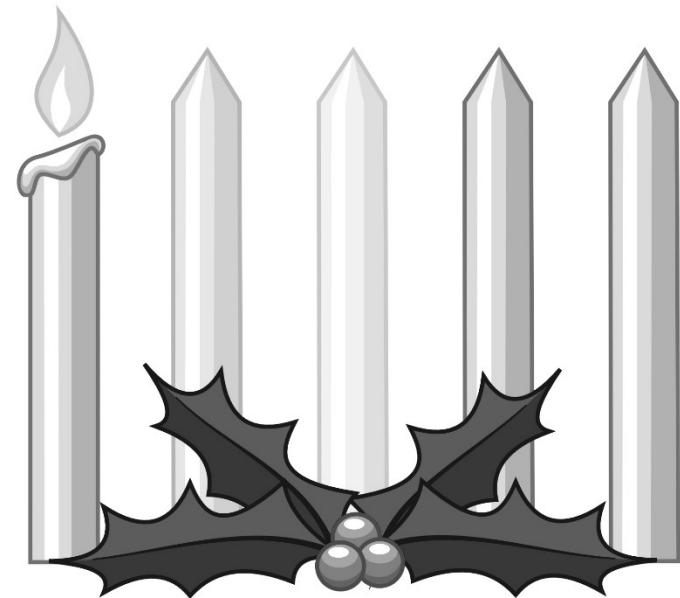
### Christmas Day

10:00am Holy Communion Shrivvenham, St Andrew & Facebook  
Please note the earlier start time

11:00am Family Service Ashbury, St Mary  
followed by Communion

*From Darkness to Light*

*A Service for the first Sunday of Advent*



*held in the church of  
St Andrew, Shrivvenham*

*Sunday 1st December 2024  
at 5.30pm*

*The service begins in darkness as the light of Christ, from the Paschal Candle, is spread among us from the back of the church*

*The choir sing: Let all mortal flesh keep silence*

### **Hymn**

Advent is a time of waiting  
for the life that is to be.  
When the Christ, by prophets promised,  
sits enthroned on Mary's knee,  
human in the way that we are;  
come to earth for you and me.

Choirs of angels are rehearsing  
Glory to our God on high  
Shepherds in the fields are watching  
where their bleating charges lie.  
Distant magi, watching, restless  
scan the dark mysterious sky.

Hope is all our theme for Advent,  
hope for all the human race.  
All our hope on God is founded,  
God who shows a human face.  
God who made the Earth and planets  
now appears in time and space.

The light of God  
Lead us and make us unafraid  
The power of God  
Protect us and make us strong  
The joy of God  
Heal us and make us happy  
The grace of God  
Bless us and keep us loving now and evermore.

**Amen**

**Hymn 307:** Hills of the north rejoice

Now, as we enter this time of waiting,  
stay with us, Lord.

**Stay with us, Lord.**

Soon, as we say goodbye to each other,  
stay with us, Lord.

**Stay with us, Lord.**

Always and everywhere, as we travel homewards,  
stay with us, Lord.

**Stay with us, Lord. Amen**

*The choir sing: In the stillness of the night*

### **The Blessing**

There will be a retiring collection.

Lord by your presence, light up the past, that we may learn from it with thankfulness.  
Light up the present, that we might live in it with love.  
Light up the future that we may prepare for it in hope.  
As we watch and wait and pray, may we be always ready to encounter the Lord who is already and always with us.  
**Amen**

We thank you, God, for the people whose lives have been light in dark places. We pray for ourselves that God's light may shine in us.  
**Amen**

**Lord Jesus we thank you, that when the world was very dark, you came to bring light into our darkness.**

**You came into the night to bring light into the lives of Mary and Joseph.**

**You came to Bethlehem, then, as now, a very troubled town, bringing light to all who came to trust you.**

**You come to us now, into our lives and into our world, bringing light still to your people.**

**We ask you now, once again, to accept this worship that we bring as we come again to the manger.**

**Help us to see there the light that will shine for us; not just at Christmas, but every day of the year.**  
**Amen**

We await the Christ,  
**the one who will reveal God to us.**  
He comes to us as sparkling light:  
**twinkling with joy and playfulness.**  
He comes to us as everyday light:  
**brightening the ordinary world around us.**  
He comes to us as softened light:  
**creating a gentle, healing space in the shadows.**  
He comes to us as a focused spotlight:  
**bring truth and justice into stark relief.**  
This is the light of the world:  
**Jesus Christ, coming to shine among us.**

**Our Father,  
which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.  
Amen**

*The lights are turned on and candles extinguished*

*The Choir sing: O come, O come, Emmanuel*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Almighty God,  
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness  
and to put on the armour of light,  
now in the time of this mortal life,  
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great  
humility;  
that on the last day, when he shall come again in his  
glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead,  
we may rise to the life immortal;  
through him who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen**

**We believe in God, robed in splendour, veiled in  
mystery,  
ruler alike of darkness and light.  
We encounter God in Jesus Christ, who was tortured  
and put to death, but whose radiance could not be  
quenched;  
whose touch brings a blaze of colour to a dull, drab  
world: reviving the weary, healing the wounded,  
dazzling the satisfied.  
We walk with God, guided by the light of God's loving  
Spirit, who enters the shadowed places of our hearts  
and leads us into truth and life.  
We wait for God, and for the fulfilment of God's  
promises,  
for the time when the darkness will hold no fear and  
the light will no longer blind, but creation will be  
made whole once more and God's peace will reign for  
ever.**

**Hymn 449:** Lo, he comes with clouds descending

**Reading 1:** Genesis 1: 1-5

**Reading 2:** Psalm 13

*The choir sing: This is the truth sent from above*

**Reading 3:** Baruch 4: 36 – 5: 9

**Reading 4:** Isaiah 7: 10-15

**Hymn 584:** Of the Father's love begotten

**Reading 5:** Luke 1: 26-33

**Reading 6:** Luke 1: 68-79

**Hymn 452:** Longing for Light

### **Prayers**

Almighty God,  
who in Jesus Christ  
has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,  
forgive us our sins,  
open our eyes to God's truth,  
strengthen us to do God's will  
and give us the joy of his kingdom,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**