



The Shrevenham and Ashbury Benefice

"Mirroring the hospitality of God"

Sunday 14th February Sunday before Lent



Vicar: The Rev'd Norma Fergusson. Tel 01793 784338
vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk

Associate Vicar: The Rev'd Canon Paul Richardson. Tel 01793 710241
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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

Sunday 14th February

11.30am Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

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

Tuesday

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

Ash Wednesday

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

10:30am The Character Course via Zoom.

6:00pm Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

7:30pm The Character Course 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

7:45pm Compline for Lent. Live on [Facebook](#).

Sunday 21st February

11.30am Holy Communion. Live on [Facebook](#).

5:30pm Evensong. Live on [Facebook](#).



Ash for Ash Wednesday

By far the easiest option is to purchase it!

However, if you're feeling brave please follow the instructions below. Once you have ash you can either use it with us as part of our online service at 6pm on Ash Wednesday (17th February) or have your own reflective time at home.

Find last year's Palm Cross (could be the hardest bit), a lighter/matches and a bowl you're happy to burn things in! Last year I used a wok, which is very forgiving. It's best to do this outside unless you enjoy the smell of smoke in your house and the sound of the smoke alarm going off as you work. Unfold the cross before burning. Some websites recommend pushing your ash through a sieve to make it fine. You could use a pestle and mortar – or small people might like to help using their fingers. Mix your ash with a little oil (approx ½ tsp per 1 palm cross) in the lid of an old jam jar, then put the jar on top to keep it safe until Ash Wednesday.

Advice adapted from the Facebook group: Church, Covid, Lent, Holy Week & Easter

COME AND SEE

Life is very difficult in this time of pandemic. Many people are asking deep questions of faith. They're wondering about their purpose, the meaning of life... asking questions of eternity and suffering and hope.



Photo: Sally-Ann Spence

Will you join us

as we explore the heart of the Christian faith together?

Sign up via the link below to receive daily reflections and weekly videos and podcasts by email.

www.oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see/

Or visit our [website](#) for more information.

For those who would like to meet to discuss the reflections, videos and podcasts, and what we are discovering about God, and ourselves through "Come and See", we are laying on 6 sessions via Zoom on Thursday evenings, and Saturday breakfast-time.

Thursday from 7:30pm – 8:45pm

on 25th February, 11th and 25th March

Saturday from 8:00am – 9:15am

on 28th February, 13th and 27th March

Email [Lucy Laird](mailto:Lucy.Laird@shrivenham.ashbury.benefice@outlook.com) to receive a Zoom link to join in.

Norma, Paul, and Richard are available by telephone if you would like to discuss your thoughts about "Come and See" one-to-one.

Norma 01793 784338

Paul 01793 710241

Richard 07788 436831

Ashbury Cycle of Prayer

Please pray this week for all who live and work in Odstone Farm & Cottages.

Clergy Days Off

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

Farewell to Padre Phil



Some of you will know that Padre Phil Burrows will be leaving Shrivenham in the next couple of weeks.

Under normal circumstances, we would have found a way to come together to thank him for all he has done, but we have given him a print of our Benefice churches as a thank you and farewell.

We'll miss you, Phil – good luck and God go with you.

A Waiting Game

It must be over 20 years since I was last asked to contribute to the Newsletter and we were then in an interregnum. Ironically the covid situation this year poses some similar problems. Then we were waiting for a new vicar; now we are blessed with two vicars, but Paul, our new associate vicar, has to self-isolate.

We are once again in a waiting game.

Waiting for it to stop raining, waiting for some signs of spring, waiting to be called for the precious vaccine, waiting to see our loved ones once more, waiting for a hug and to be hugged, our young waiting to get back to school/university, waiting for a party, waiting to enjoy a meal out that someone else has prepared, waiting to be allowed a few days holiday away or with separated family, maybe even waiting for some remedial surgery and waiting to reopen our churches.

Our clergy are doing their best to share their ministry with us, with messages online and in rendering support to those in need and the bereaved. Though funerals and some weddings have taken place under restrictions the wider public have been prevented from taking part. No marriage celebrations to be enjoyed, no wakes to honour lives well lived.

Already many early summer sporting occasions have been cancelled with the emphasis on the elite professional sports continuing behind closed doors but amateur sports being cancelled. There will be no point to point this year at Lockinge on Easter Monday. The Cheltenham festival hopefully will run but without crowds in March.

However, it is to be really hoped that church services can recommence before Easter. I do hope we can celebrate Easter properly though singing might be a step too far! All those postponed memorial services and christenings will be sure to keep Norma and Paul rather busy once we get back to the new normal.

Dickie Green (Churchwarden, Ashbury)

Daily Prayer for the Nation

Psalm 23 has been a source of strength for thousands of years.
Let's pause and say it every day at 6 pm through this crisis we now face.

When we are isolated and alone, we remember God is with us; we place our hands in his hands...

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

When we are tired and confused...

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

When we are worn out with worry...

He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

When we are sick and afraid and if we lose those we love...

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff - they comfort me.

When we face difficulties today and we hope for a better tomorrow...

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

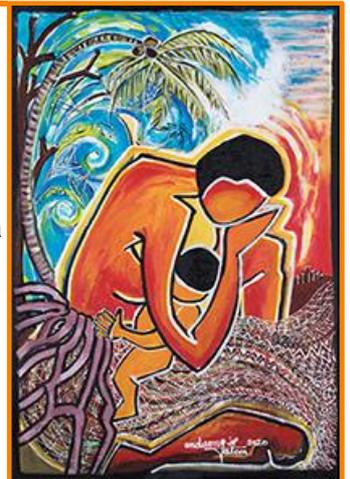
In the face of trouble & difficulty of all kinds, we remember Jesus' promise of life beyond death...

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

The Bible verses are from NRSV,
the commentary is by the Bishop of Oxford.

World Day of Prayer Service 2.00 pm Friday 5th March

This year's service highlights the lives of the people, especially the women and children, of Vanuatu which is a cluster of islands about 1100 miles east of Australia. It's one of the first countries to pray on the Day of Prayer each year, which may partially explain their theme of "Building on a Strong Foundation."



It will be live streamed on Facebook and we hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us. Please remember that you don't need a Facebook account to be able to do this.

Service booklets are available from Morva White.
morvawhite@gmx.com

If you wish to support the work of the World Day of Prayer, there is a donation button on their website.

www.wwdp.org.uk