



The Shrevenham and Ashbury Benefice

'Mirroring the hospitality of God'

Vicar: The Rev'd Norma Fergusson. Tel 01793 784338

vicar@shrevenhamandashbury.co.uk

Licensed Lay Minister: Mr Richard Fergusson. Tel 07788 436831



Sunday 25th December 2022

Christmas Day

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

Please respect the concerns of others in the congregation. Hand sanitizer is available.

Saturday 24th December Christmas Eve

- 4:00pm Ashbury, St Mary
Crib Service
- 4:00pm Shrevenham, St Andrew
Crib Service
- 5:00pm Watchfield, St Thomas
Holy Communion (BCP)
- 5:00pm Bourton, St James
Family Carol Service
- 11:30pm Shrevenham, St Andrew & [Facebook](#)
Midnight Mass
- 11:30pm Longcot, St Mary.
Midnight Mass

Sunday 25th December Christmas Day

- 9:00am Compton Beauchamp, St Swithun
Holy Communion (BCP)
- 10:15am Shrevenham, St Andrew & [Facebook](#)
Holy Communion
- 10:30am Ashbury, St Mary
Family Service
with Communion by Extension

No midweek services until Tuesday 10th January

Sunday 1st January

- 11:00am Ashbury, St Mary & [Facebook](#)
Benefice Celtic Holy Communion

Saturday 7th January

- 10:00am Bourton, St James
Family Service

Sunday 8th January

- 9:30am Longcot, St Mary & [Facebook](#)
Holy Communion
- 9:30am Watchfield, St Thomas
Matins
- 10:15am Shrevenham, St Andrew
Holy Communion
- 11:00am Ashbury, St Mary
Holy Communion
- 3:00pm Watchfield, St Thomas
Benefice Sunday School
- 5:30pm Shrevenham, St Andrew & [Facebook](#)
Compline and Benediction

Community Cycle of Prayer

Please pray this week for all who live and work in Malthouse Close in Ashbury, and Benfield Place, Claridge Close, Lawrence Avenue, Prince Drive, Miles Close, Penny Close and Raven Way in Shrevenham.

Condolences

Our condolences to the family and friends of the late Florence Cole. Please keep them in your prayers.

Christmas Message

One of the carols sung this year by our Benefice Choir was 'In the Stillness' by the contemporary composer Sally Beamish. It speaks of the stillness of a candle-lit church, of newly fallen snow, of the stars shedding their healing light, of a choir softly singing. All familiar images, but, if we are honest, it can be very hard to find any stillness in the world we see around us, with its sufferings and conflicts and tensions. Where then should we look for the peace on earth and good will to men promised to the shepherds by the Christmas angels? I think we must go, in the words of the Bidding prayer 'even unto Bethlehem,' and seek 'the mildness of a night by stable bare, the quietness of a lull near cradle fair.' The carol ends: 'There's a patience as we wait for a new morn, and the presence of a child soon to be born.'

We wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas.
Richard and Norma

Rev'd Norma Fergusson is off duty from Monday 2nd January until Friday 6th January.

For pastoral emergencies please call 01793 783519.
For other church enquiries please contact your local churchwarden or the Benefice Administrator.

The Benefice office will be closed from Saturday 24th December until Saturday 7th January. Emails will be checked regularly.

Favourite Carols

We hope you have enjoyed the daily posts we have been sharing throughout Advent on our [Facebook](#) page. Thank you to everyone who has contributed – we have heard some lovely memories and reflections. It has also been wonderful to discover unfamiliar carols, and new versions of traditional favourites via the links to the recordings on YouTube. All the videos will shortly be available to watch on our [website](#) along with the links to YouTube.



Songs & Stories and Baby & Toddler Groups

The groups that meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays are now taking a break until after the school Christmas holidays and will restart in the new year.

Shrivenham Warm Spaces Initiative

St Andrew's Church is part of the Shrivenham Warm Spaces initiative. If you're feeling cold, please come in and help yourself to tea or coffee which is available in our kitchen at the far end of the church. The milk will be in the fridge. You are welcome to sit in the church and enjoy the peace and space of the building.

The church is generally open every day as a warm space except during services and on Thursday mornings during school term when we have a regular booking. Please check the weekly Newsletter in the notice board outside the church or on our website for information about what is happening each week.

A Christmas Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ child
be ours this Christmas and always. Amen



News from Fernham

Fernham villagers enjoyed 'Carols on Elmside Green' on Thursday evening. Thank you to Tom Arnold for accompanying the singing and to the Woodman Inn for the mulled wine and mince pies. A closer look at the photos reveals Bishop Gavin joining in, having just paid an informal visit to see the damage caused by the recent fire, and to thank the locals for all their efforts that weekend and since towards restoring the building to its former glory.



COLLECT

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten
Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a
pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born
again
and made your children by adoption
and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy
Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our
Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who
announces peace, who brings good
news, who announces salvation, who
says to Zion, "Your God reigns."
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their
voices, together they sing for
joy; for in plain sight they see the
return of the LORD to Zion. Break
forth together into singing, you
ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD
has comforted his people, he has
redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has
bared his holy arm before the eyes
of all the nations; and all the ends of
the earth shall see the salvation of our
God.

PSALM Psalm 98

R *All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.*

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvellous things.
With his right hand and his holy arm
has he won for himself the victory. **R**

The Lord has made known his victory;
his righteousness has he openly
shown
in the sight of the nations.
He remembers his mercy and
faithfulness
to the house of Israel,

and all the ends of the earth have
seen
the victory of our God. **R**

Shout with joy to the Lord, all you
lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice and sing.
Sing to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.
With trumpets and the sound of the
horn
shout with joy before the King, the
Lord. **R**

Let the sea make a noise and all that
is in it,
the lands and those who dwell
therein.
Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy
before the Lord,
when he comes to judge the earth.
In righteousness shall he judge the
world,
and the peoples with equity. **R**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors
in many and various ways by the
prophets, but in these last days he
has spoken to us by a Son, whom he
appointed heir of all things, through
whom he also created the worlds.
He is the reflection of God's glory
and the exact imprint of God's very
being, and he sustains all things by
his powerful word. When he had
made purification for sins, he sat
down at the right hand of the Majesty
on high, having become as much
superior to angels as the name he
has inherited is more excellent than
theirs. [For to which of the angels did
God ever say, "You are my Son; today
I have begotten you"? Or again, "I
will be his Father, and he will be my
Son"? And again, when he brings the
firstborn into the world, he says, "Let
all God's angels worship him." Of the
angels he says, "He makes his angels
winds, and his servants flames of fire."
But of the Son he says, "Your throne,
O God, is for ever and ever, and
the righteous sceptre is the sceptre
of your kingdom. You have loved

righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has
anointed you with the oil of gladness
beyond your companions." And, "In
the beginning, Lord, you founded the
earth, and the heavens are the work
of your hands; they will perish, but
you remain; they will all wear out like
clothing; like a cloak you will roll them
up, and like clothing they will be
changed. But you are the same, and
your years will never end."

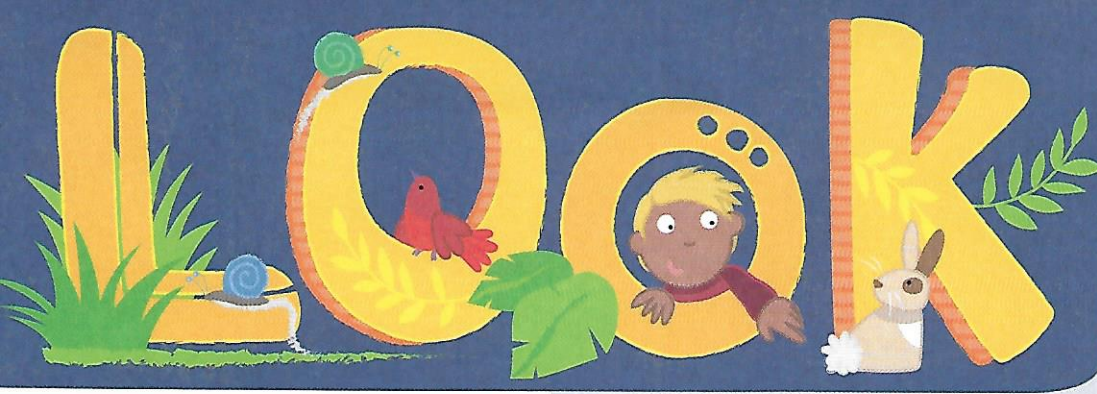
GOSPEL John 1:1-14

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to John.*

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and
the Word was God. He was in the
beginning with God. All things came
into being through him, and without
him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him
was life, and the life was the light
of all people. The light shines in the
darkness, and the darkness did not
overcome it. There was a man sent
from God, whose name was John.
He came as a witness to testify to the
light, so that all might believe through
him. He himself was not the light, but
he came to testify to the light. The
true light, which enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world. He was in
the world, and the world came into
being through him; yet the world did
not know him. He came to what was
his own, and his own people did not
accept him. But to all who received
him, who believed in his name, he
gave power to become children of
God, who were born, not of blood or
of the will of the flesh or of the will
of man but of God. And the Word
became flesh and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory, the glory
as of a father's only son, full of grace
and truth.

POST COMMUNION

God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine our
hearts and shine in our words and
deeds;
through him who is Christ the Lord.



Sunday 25 December 2022

Luke 16:19-31

The Nativity of the Lord

In the
GOSPEL TODAY

JESUS IS HERE!

Share the light

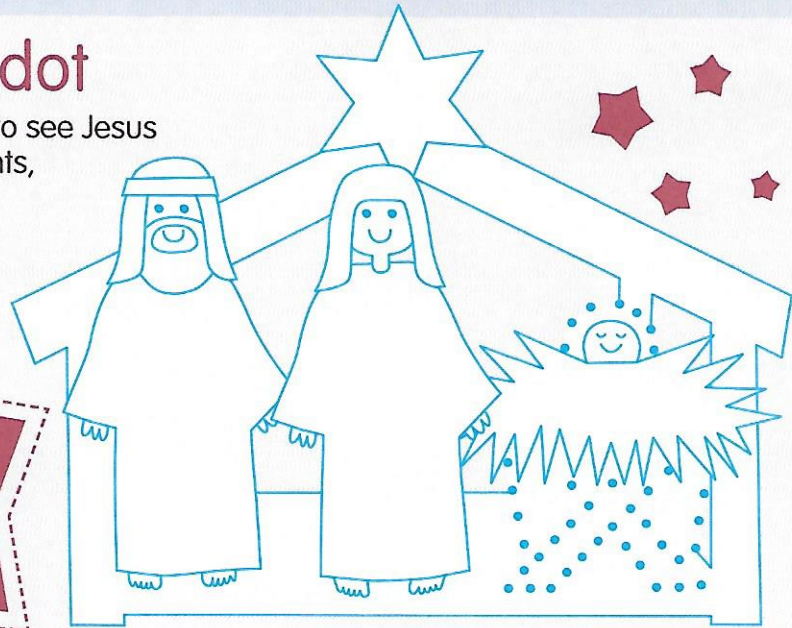
We can bring light into the world when we care for the people around us.

How can you remember the true meaning of Christmas and share Jesus' light and love today?

I can share Jesus' light and love today when I...

Dot to dot

Join the dots to see Jesus with his parents, Mary and Joseph.



Jesus is born today in Bethlehem



Jesus' birthday!

Today we are celebrating Jesus' birthday. What present would you buy Jesus to celebrate? Draw or write about your idea in the gift.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Thank you for coming to live with us, Jesus, and showing me how much you love me. Help me to shine with your light and your love as I enjoy Christmas. Amen.

Christmas sudoku

Fill the grid with the Christmas pictures. Each row, column and grid should have just one of each of the different pictures.

