

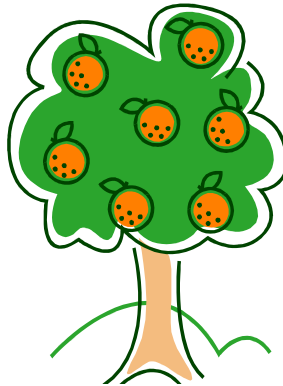
**ASHBURY**

**COMPTON**

**LONGCOT**

**FERNHAM**

**NEWSLETTER JULY 2010**



**“We pray that you may bear fruit in active  
goodness of every kind...”**

## On listening to a sermon.

I have recently had the pleasure of being one of the many attending a large celebratory service for new communicants into the Roman Catholic faith. My granddaughter was receiving her first Holy Communion.

Being the other side of the pulpit during the sermon provided an interesting opportunity to observe the reactions and concentration (or lack of) by other members of the congregation.

Being a comparatively new priest, I am all too aware that some of my sermons may lack the ability to stimulate or inspire listeners as effectively as my more experienced colleagues– or, to put it bluntly, verge on being boring at times!

John Pritchard, our Bishop of Oxford, in recognising this aspect of church services, has made a few humorous suggestions in a chapter on ‘Things to do in a boring sermon’ in his book “Going to Church.” However, he advises not to use more than one in the same sermon, unless absolutely desperate!

1. Practise sleeping with your eyes open. Not easy but a useful transferable skill for use at home, office, PCC etc.
2. Dedicate several minutes to reaching for a packet of sweets in your pocket, taking the wrapper off and getting it into your mouth, without making a noise and without anyone noticing. If you succeed, you’ll feel enormous satisfaction.
3. Work out some congregational chants to liven up the service e.g. for Anglican churches “What do we want? Gradual change!” “When do we want it? In due course!” (It’s unwise to actually use these chants immediately but enjoy the fantasy).
4. Set yourself little problems, like: if an Anglican sermon last an average of 12 minutes, a Methodist sermon 16 minutes, a Roman Catholic 8 minutes and a Baptist 23 minutes; and if there are 16,000 Anglican churches each with 1.5 sermons on an average Sunday, how many Methodist, Roman Catholic and Baptist sermons would you need to equal the total number of Anglican sermon-minutes per Sunday? And does it matter?
5. Think of what you might say to the preacher at the door on the way out. Favourites might be “Do we get time off for good behaviour next week?”  
“It’s a shame they make you preach so often.” “Interesting sermon Vicar – just remind me of the point you were making.....”

He also reminds us that preaching is a powerful declaration of the acts of God, such that our minds are informed, our hearts are touched and our actions are inspired – head, heart and hands. He tells us to pray for the preacher carrying such an awesome responsibility and for each other; that

we can catch God's particular word for ourselves, among the many other words that aren't.

If, after reading this, you would like to follow it up by studying Bishop John's words of wisdom on 'How to get the **most** from a sermon' (without having to resort to any of the above coping strategies), I would strongly recommend reading the rest of chapter six, in his book 'Going to Church-a user's guide' from SPCK.

Many blessings to you all, **Revd Anne Bell.**

### **Shrivenham & Ashbury Benefice Services in July**

#### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Shrivenham
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Fernham
9.00am	Matins (BCP)	Watchfield
10.15am	Family Service	Shrivenham
11.00am	Morning Worship	Ashbury
3.00pm	Joint Service	Chapel Longcot

#### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
10.30am	Patronal Festival St Swithuns. Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton Beauchamp
12.30pm	Said Baptism Service	Shrivenham

#### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July**

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Shrivenham
9.00am	Matins (BCP)	Watchfield
9.00am	Holy Communion	Fernham
9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Family Service	Ashbury

#### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July**

9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
9.00am	Matins	Compton
9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
6.00pm	Evening Service	Fernham

## **Ashbury Evangelical Free Church**

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

10.00am Communion

5.00pm Evening Service

### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

10.00am Communion

5.00pm Video and Tea

### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July**

10.00am Communion

5.00pm Bible Study

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July**

10.00am Communion

There will be a **coffee morning** at 10.30am on Wednesday **7<sup>th</sup> July**.

## **Ashbury News**

### **London 10km Race for Life in memory of Lizzie Dagnall**

We are raising money for a skin cancer research project headed by Professor Middleton who treated Lizzie Dagnall. We are going to run the race on July 11th, which is poignant in itself as it would have been Lizzie's birthday. You will see us in training in and around the village so please give us a wave and wish us well. If you would like to help us with this project then you are able to donate on line via the following address:

**<http://myprojects.cancerresearchuk.org/group-giving/london-10km>**.

With thanks, Sandra, Rachel, Verity and Hanna

### **Ashbury Indoor Bowls**

Advancing years and or poor health have recently affected the number of players who have normally been present on Thursday evenings. The numbers attending for approximately 20 years have been about 16, which is a very satisfactory number and of those attending some come from Didcot, Hungerford, Shrivenham and Swindon.

The club has been fortunate to have had much needed and very generous help from some of the villagers who regularly lay the somewhat heavy mat on which the games are played. It is with some optimism that readers of the Ashbury news will realise the pleasure that the club has given to former and present members who have enjoyed the company and relatively light exercise that it affords.

The only requirement for playing is a pair of light shoes. Just come along to the Village Hall on **Thursdays 7.30-9.30pm. Ian Robson**

**Ashbury Summer Dance  
at the  
Manor Barn on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30**

Featuring “Locomotion” the Swindon Pop / Rock / Soul cover band.  
Their music spans the decades from the 1960s onwards  
and includes items from Blondie to the Beatles, Meat Loaf to Michael  
Jackson,  
and many, many more.

Tickets £17.00 to include one welcome drink with nibbles and supper  
Bar and Raffle

More information and tickets available from:

**Graham Clarke 710305      Maggie Simons 710801      James Ruggiero  
710780**

Organised by the Village Hall Committee for the Hall Restoration Fund

**Christian Aid Week**

**Many thanks** to all those who gave so generously. The total raised was  
**£926.05**

Please note that **Ride and Stride** in aid of the Oxfordshire Historic Churches  
Trust is on **Saturday 11th September** this year and keep the date free for a  
day out. Details to be announced later.

**Parish Council News:** The new recycling bins which come into use in the  
autumn are available to view at the Village Hall.

**Weddings through the decades-Flower Festival’s success- “Where’s the  
exhibition moving on to next?”**

This was a tremendous success, attended by over 400 people and raising  
over £1100. The produce stall alone raised £300 (thanks, Penny Green, for  
all that baking!) Around 120 attended the renewal of marriage vows and we  
ran out of chairs in the village hall with all those partaking of cream teas  
afterwards. Thanks to the many people helping, especially Linda Kinder for

the workshop, those lending dresses and photographs; Bunce's for the wrought iron flower frame, Rumbold Holland, R.M.C.S., and New College for free services and equipment, Bishopstone and Hinton Parva W.I. for part-funding the flowers from their Lottery Grant and Wantage Male Voice Choir for singing to us and missing the football!

Thanks also to Ashbury School for their 1940's display and many others amongst whom are Eileen Law, (bride's dress flowers) Leonie Knott, Clare and Alex McGlashan, Jane Worrall, June Wilmers, Diana Leppard, Julie Franklin, Lisa Smith and Nicola Foster; also Ken Leon, Stewart Smith and Chris Shutie. Cream teas, transport, manning the Church and arranging and taking down the displays; all was made possible with their help.

**Ashbury Bellringers help Bishopstone** raise £645 for new Church Gallery

Friday 4th June was a hot night, and not just the weather. 'Horse racing' at the Royal Oak, Bishopstone was neck and neck, the crowd on its feet, the prizes magnificent and the Tote paid handsomely. The Scrabble Ladies wore their Ascot hats.

Supper was superb, washed down with glasses of 'Moonlight.' Punters stayed late and everyone commented on the handsome race cards made by Mike and Fiona Stretch. The 'owners' of the winning horses were thrilled with their prizes donated by The Royal Oak, The Water Gardens, The Black Horse, Charlbury Farm Stables, IV Florists and the Treatment Rooms, Shrivenham, Rodney Powell, Tara, and Rob and Jo Selbourne.

Rob Hollister from Didcot ran Race Night for us, supported by Fiona, Colin and Amanda Saunders, three of our Ashbury bellringers. Thanks to Ashbury Electrical Ltd., Roger Baker Architects, Cedar Telecom, Liddington Warren Farm, Barbara Rayner, Queenie Cull, The Royal Oak and the Scrabble Ladies, who sponsored the horse races.

£5,098 has been donated since January; half way to our £10K target. Jean Bone and Phil Bunce generously supported us in June and we raised £20 from our plant sale.

We hope to have gallery plans on display at the Bishopstone and Hinton Parva Church Fete on 26 June with details of our next fund-raising event, the Harvest Happenings Pig Roast.

Our target this month is to raise £750 to pay for the new floor. If you would like to help the bellringers restore the gallery, please call 791 286 or email [janemccutchan@btinternet.com](mailto:janemccutchan@btinternet.com)

## **Longcot News**

### **Longcot Churches working together-Chapel News**

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> BAVAS meets.** Yes, we're a week early but we hope to see plenty of regulars and perhaps a few new faces. We've started watching 'Tom's Midnight Garden' and look forward to the second episode of this intriguing story. Eats, songs and stickers as usual.

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> 3pm. United Service** led by Revd Richard Hancock. People of all denominations or none are welcome to join us and stay for tea and biscuits afterwards.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> Friday Fellowship** outing to Kintbury for a trip on the horse drawn barge and Sandham Memorial Chapel where there are magnificent murals painted by Stanley Spencer depicting his experiences of WW1.

**Sat 24<sup>th</sup> 10.15am**-Coffee Morning in aid of Help for Heroes.

### **Benefice News – Country Matters**

I have sometimes wondered if I had to choose, would I rather be blind or would I prefer to be deaf. I think it fair to say that advances in preventing blindness have been more successful than in curing deafness; quite a few people are deaf in one ear which causes difficulty in getting the direction of sound. But without hearing what would we miss? Music, singing, good conversation, the sound of baby's first cry, country noises like those of a cat, a dog, a horse neighing or a donkey making donkey noises, and in the real countryside all those little sounds most people take for granted and hardly notice. I am no expert and have much to learn but am still trying to improve my appreciation of these sounds.

As I write I can hear the "jack" of jackdaws that have been nesting in an unused chimney, the harsher notes of the rooks now swelled by the addition of juveniles and very occasionally I now hear the unmistakable bark of raven overhead, usually as a pair. There is often a cock pheasant near the house and they will definitely make their cocking up call if they are at roost and a fox walks past. The French partridge makes a different noise to the rarer English partridge, especially in flight. At dusk you may hear the screech of the little owl or the hoot of the tawny. The barn owl does not hoot but makes different calls varying from a shriek to hissing and a yap. Foxes also make a strange shriek early in the spring at mating time.

Of the smaller birds, a favourite is the lark, high overhead, the yellow hammer with its signal call a “little bit of bread and no cheese” emphasising the cheese, the corn bunting; a rather nondescript plump little brown bird. It is prevalent here on the downs but is otherwise uncommon and you hear its “jangling keys” call from a fence post. The wren’s alarm call is a series of clicks and probably our most common little bird here is the chaffinch with its sometimes ascending final note, whereas the willow warbler gives a recognisable descending series of notes. In the vale you can readily hear the lusty “chiff chaff chiff” of the elusive chiffchaff. I must also mention the blackbird and the song thrush; both sing delightfully, usually from a visible perch high up.

Other distinctive calls are those of the woodpeckers which are similar but different to those of the kingfisher which used to nest near Lower Mill at Kingston Winslow. I can now recognise the quail, a summer visitor to the downs, having first heard it in Italy. Nightingales alas are not heard any longer in Berkeley Square. They can be found in this country and are drawn to coppiced hazel woods but alas I have only heard them abroad, in Italy and Slovakia.

In the last month Ashbury staged a very successful festival of flowers celebrating the institution of marriage, with a display of wedding dresses through the ages, which I am sure is reported elsewhere. It was pretty special. Coleridge, with tongue in cheek I should think, said that the ideal marriage was between a mute wife and a deaf husband. I for one am not looking forward to any possible loss of hearing!

**Richard Green**

**Benefice Clergy**

Vicar	Rev Richard Hancock	01793 780183
Curates	Rev Anne Bell (duty days Tuesday, Wednesday, Sunday.)	01367 820091
	Rev Canon Edwin Clements (duty days Tuesday, Friday, Sunday)	01793 710811
NSM	Rev A K Weaver	01793 782364
Methodist Minister	Rev Graham Tidmarsh	01793 782584

**Please Note: Newsletter entries for August 2010**

Submit your entries for August to M. Turner at Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN, by **16<sup>th</sup> July**. [mlt@mltgnt.com](mailto:mlt@mltgnt.com) (01793 710302)